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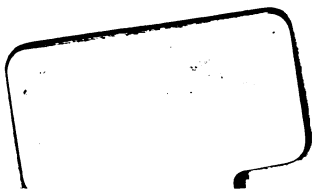




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A FLINT-FOSSIL FROM MILTON-ABBAS.

To the Editor of the "Oxford Chronicle."

SIR,—The following letter speaks for itself to geologists: "Pitt Rivers Museum, Farnham, Blandford, May 15th, 1916. Dear Sir,—In reply to yours of the 13th inst., I have written to the Editor of 'Notes and Queries.' I am sorry you were unable to get more information re the Centenarian of Gussage. I was in Blandford the other day and called for the flint. It is an excellent specimen of the impression of the tentacles of the Argonauta, both the upper and lower parts being well defined. A small portion of the nautilus shell is clearly impressed; which to my mind is sufficient evidence of its not being of the Poulps variety of Octopods. It would be interesting to know exactly the locality from which it came, as it might have been dug up miles from the spot on which it was found, possibly in chalk-marl, road-mettle being often contracted for over area to be used in another part of the country. It is unfortunate that we have no fossil or geological collection on view. It would no doubt be appreciated more where these collections are formed, for instance, say, Dorchester, it being found in Dorset; or you might possibly still like Oxford to have it. Again thanking you for papers, etc.—Yours faithfully, Edward C. Moore. To E. S. Dodgson, Esq., M.A." I found this interesting fossil on a heap of road-metal on April 20th, 1916, at the very top of the long ascent from Stickland, in front of the lodge of the Milton Abbey Estate. At Milton (= Middleton) they told me that these heaps of stones were brought from no great distance. I hope this vestige of submarine Dorset will be brought to the Museum in Oxford.

EDWARD S. DODGSON.

May 17th, 1916.

A SERMON BY BISHOP BEVERIDGE.

To the Editor of THE OXFORD TIMES.

SIR,—In the Bodleian Library there is a portrait of Bishop W. Beveridge, who lived, according to the Dictionary of National Biography, from 1637 until 1708, when he died in the Cloisters of Westminster Abbey. Among his books, which are kept there, one of sixteen pages in octavo is entitled: "A Sermon Preach'd before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, In Parliament Assembled, in the Abby (sic)—Church at Westminster, January the 30th. 1695-6 being the Day of the Martyrdom of King Charles I. By William, Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. Acts xxii. 20. And when the Blood of thy Martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting to his Death, and kept the Raiment of them that slew him. London: Printed by H. Hills, in Blackfryars, near the Water-side, for the Benefit of the Poor. 1703." The discourse is interesting as showing why the Anglican Bishops, and the English Parliament under King Charles the Second, the Hero of Boscobel, gave the title of Martyr to the unlucky victim of the odious tyrant, and enemy of liberty, Oliver Cromwell. "the wretch," as Dr. H. P. Liddon once called him in a conversation with the writer of this query. He describes King Charles I. as a learned man. For bibliographical purposes, it would be desirable to learn whether that sermon was published for the first time in 1708, and whether it was then printed before, or after, the departure of the Prelate who delivered it.

EDWARD S. DODGSON,

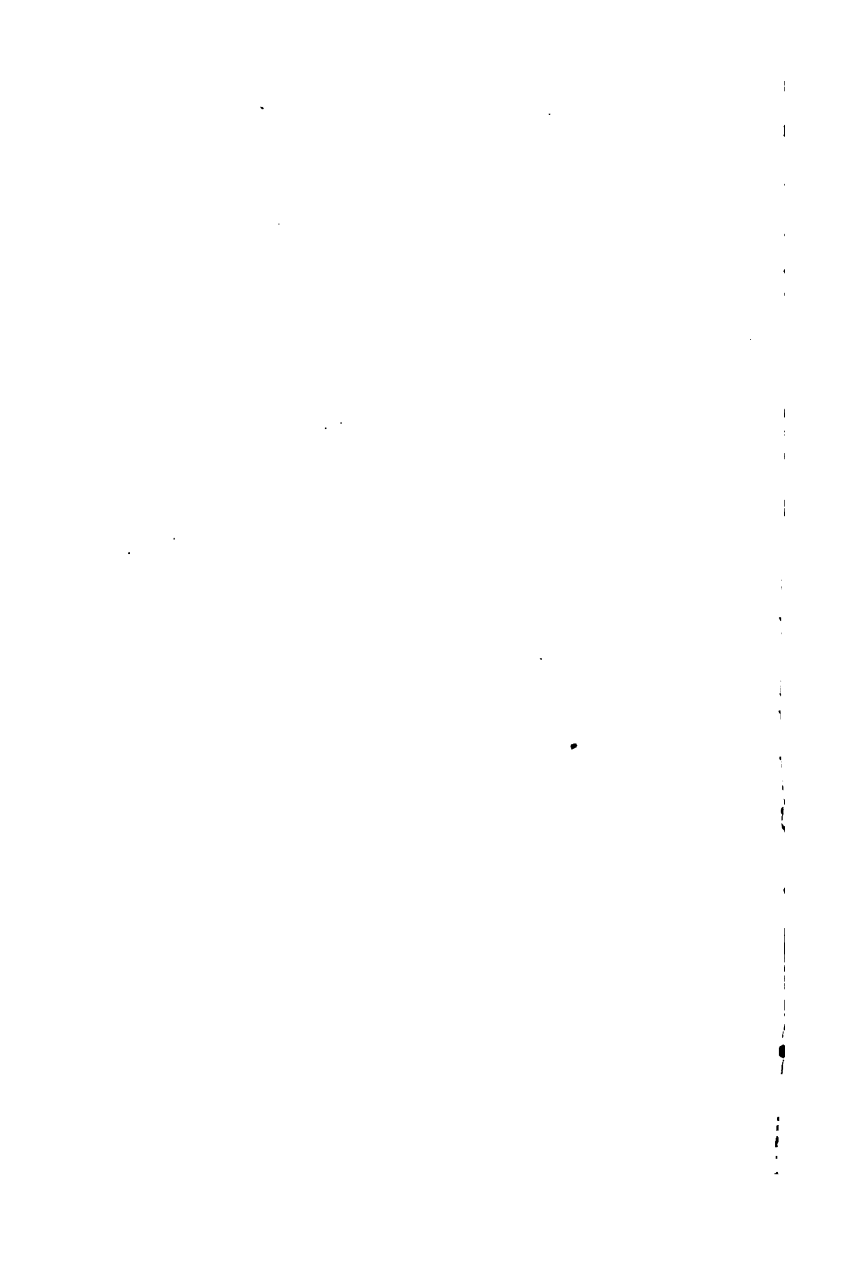
8-Apple-Tree, 1916.

To Betsy Edwards
with love June 2nd
1950.

To the Bodleian Library
, with love, May 29, Oak-Apple-Day,
1916: from E. S. Dodson, A. A.

HOLY MEN OF OLD.





HOLY MEN OF OLD;

BEING

SHORT NOTICES

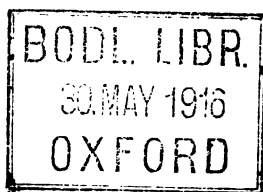
OF SUCH AS ARE NAMED

IN THE CALENDAR OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

LONDON:

JOHN AND CHARLES MOZLEY, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND JOSEPH MASTERS, NEW BOND STREET.

1849.



John and Charles Mozley, Printers, Derby.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN the Calendar of the English Prayer-book, besides the names of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb—of His Blessed Mother, His fore-runner, and His Evangelists—are those of about fifty of His Saints. Of some of these we know little beside their names, which have come down to us from those first times when Christians were all of one heart and of one soul. What must they have been to be singled out 'as Saints by men who remembered Apostles? Of others we know that they converted whole nations to the Faith, bringing the fierce Frank and plundering Northman to the obedience of Christ.

Others wore out their lives in a continual strife with the heresies that sprang up around the very foot of the Cross, or suffered the loss of all things, and of life itself, from the feudal tyrants who would be lords over God's heritage.

There are the names of feeble women in this saintly catalogue, who suffered the extremest tortures from heathen cruelty; or who gave themselves up to sit at their Lord's feet, free from the world's distractions; or, in the very thickest of its strife, and amid the most alluring of its vanities, moved silently and gladly, doing their work as unto Him. These all died in faith, and their names are written in heaven—the names of a great multitude whom no man can number. And some few of their names are written in earth, darkly and doubtfully indeed, for how should the hidden life of God's elect be made manifest to the world? Yet something has been left for us of the brightness of their example, and it is well to gather up all we may, to help us to follow them as

they followed Christ. It is in this one thing—the following of Him, that we are to imitate the Saints. Not to take any lower example than His (for who would paint after the most perfect copy, with the original before him?), but to see how perfect a copy may be made by man regenerate, of God Incarnate, and so to be ashamed of our own distorted lines and feeble colouring. It is well to compare our work with theirs, lest, according to the bent of our own mind, we either grow self-complacent, thinking that we have done great things, or slothful and desponding, as not believing that great things can be done. But we must never forget that we are looking at a copy, for if we once lose sight of the original, we shall but reproduce and exaggerate scarcely perceptible defects, which are sure to grow and multiply, in the imitation of any merely human models. The spirits of just men made perfect are withdrawn from our ken, perhaps lest our weakness should be tempted to fall down and worship them. We see them but as

they are going on to perfection, through the fiery trial which was to liken them to their Lord, and we are often unable to distinguish in their actions what belongs to human nature not yet perfected, and what springs from the inspiration of the Spirit of God. It is so even with the holy men of whom we read in Scripture, much more with those whose history comes to us through merely human channels. When we meet with anything that perplexes us in the lives of saintly men, our first thought, if we are humble, will be, that we are no judges of such as they; we shall be slow to question what may be the teaching of God's Spirit, revealed to those who do His will most perfectly, and, therefore, know it with a clearness not granted to other men. We shall be *slow* to question it; but if it seem plain to our reason and our conscience that God's Word says one thing, and even the holiest of His servants does another, we must remember that one is the Voice of our Master bidding us follow Him, the other but the

pattern of our fellow-servant, striving to obey that Voice, but liable (as long as human infirmity cleaves to him) to err.

In the lives of Mediæval Saints, are recorded many miraculous interpositions—yet this is no perplexing thought to those who realize God's Providential government, and look back upon inspired history. We there see His Hand at one period stretched out to interrupt what we call the course of nature, that is, the order of His Providence to which we are accustomed, *frequently*, and, as we should say, without any apparent cause. At other periods, all things seem to continue as they were from the Creation, and there is no open vision, and so it has been in the history of the later Church. The difference is here—the Bible history is inspired, we know of every miracle therein recorded that it is certainly true. Church history is not inspired, and therefore we cannot be certain of the miracles it relates, any more than of the facts of other histories. There is nothing incredible or even improbable in the relation

of a miracle at any period of the Church. Whether every such relation in particular be probable or credible is a question of fact, depending upon its own, that is, on human evidence. The true and child-like temper for reading such wonders aright, would seem to be gladly and thankfully to welcome all that may reasonably be taken as a shadow of that Hand which is ever invisibly over us; remembering always that God is as near, that Christ is as truly in the midst of us, when He seems to let the outward world take its ordinary course, as when the shadow of St. Peter healed the sick, or the visible sign of His Cross in heaven, converted the Emperor of the world. So shall we neither be superstitiously credulous, nor superstitiously unbelieving. If there be a better blessing than to see signs and wonders, He hath promised it those who have not seen, and yet have believed.

The following pages were put together for the children of a middle School, for whom some knowledge of the lives of Saints men-

tioned in our Calendar was thought desirable. They were mostly taken from existing works, some of which could not be indiscriminately placed in the hands of young people; but these extracts having been found suitable, they are now offered to such parents and teachers as may desire some simple notice of the kind. Nothing more has been attempted, as nothing more was within the writer's power. It seemed undesirable to make the book too long; and better to leave illustrations and explanatory reflections to be made orally by the teacher in the course of reading, as was done in the School for which it was written.

No mention is made of the Saints commemorated on the greater Festivals, as these have been fully treated of in other works: such as Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, and the Dialogues on the same subject, intended for the use of children.



ERRATA.

Page 11, line 12, for Emeventia read Emerentia.

Page 15, line 25, for trust read task.

Page 46, line 22, for their read there.

Page 68, line 26, for not read sent.

Page 87, line 4, for Brunchant read Brunchaut.

Page 88, line 21, for Lindhard read Luidhard.

Page 137, line 19, for Pontitian a read Pontitian's.

Page 141, line 21, for made Thee read made by Thee.

Page 144, line 24, for King read Bishop.

*Page 199, last line but one, and page 200, line 6, for Tou-
berelet read Tonbercht.*

Page 209, line 9, for Marmontre read Marmoutier.

Page 215, line 3, for Marmontier read Marmoutier.



HOLY MEN OF OLD.

JANUARY 8th.—290.

St. Lucian, Priest and Martyr.

THERE is much uncertainty regarding the history of St. Lucian. It is known, however, that he came into Gaul to preach the faith to the Pagan inhabitants, and that he finished his labours at Beauvais by a martyr's death. There is good reason to believe that he was a noble Roman, who accompanied St. Denys and St. Quentin on their mission into Gaul, 245. They devoted themselves with unwearied charity to preaching and baptizing in the face of danger and death, and suffered in different places, but their remains

were laid by their faithful disciples in the same tomb, 290.

Faint not, and fret not, for threatened woe,
Watchman on Truth's grey height!
Few though the faithful, and fierce though the foe,
Weakness is aye Heaven's might.

Quail not, and quake not, thou warder bold,
Be there no friend in sight;
Turn thee to question the days of old,
When weakness was aye Heaven's might.

Time's years are many, Eternity one,
And one is the Infinite;
The chosen are few, few the deeds well done;
So scantness is still Heaven's might.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 108.



JANUARY 13th.—368.

St. Hilary, Bishop and Confessor.

ST. HILARY was born at Poitiers, in Gaul. His parents were Pagans, but he was converted to the faith of Christ, and after his baptism his behaviour was so grave and holy, that he was rather like a Priest than a layman; he was remarkable, even in those strict times, for his careful avoidance of the company of unbelievers and wicked men. Little is known of his early life, except these general facts; and thus God often trains in secrecy the future rulers and defenders of His Church.

It is probable that St. Hilary was elected Bishop of Poitiers from the rank of a layman, as was often the case in the early ages, when men of the most heroic courage were needed to meet the Pagan and heretical enemies of the Church. He was consecrated about 350, soon became renowned as a preacher, and St. Martin (afterwards Bishop of Tours), then a young man,

attracted by his name, lived for some time at Poitiers as his disciple.

St. Hilary's life was spent in withstanding the heresy of the Arians, and in suffering persecution from them. He was banished for many years from his see, during which time he wrote much in defence of the Catholic faith, to encourage others in steadfast adherence to it. He congratulated the British Bishops, among others, on their constancy. At last he was allowed to return to his Bishopric, when he was received with great delight by the Church of Gaul. He finished his labours by a blessed death in the year 368.

Star of the west ! when all the skies grew dark,
And Arian clouds concealed heaven's genial eye,
Christ sent thee forth to guide his labouring ark,
From his own peaceful palace ever nigh ;
Still where thy Church her annual pathway steers,
High in the heavens thy radiant sign appears.

Angel of Poitiers ! Aquitanian Saint !
Exile to thee was drawing nearer home ;
For where Christ is was home to thee ; the plaint
Of thy bereaved Church doth thence become
Her gladness, when she welcomes thee returned,
And hails the light which in thine exile burned.

Cathedral, p. 290.

JANUARY 18th.—270.

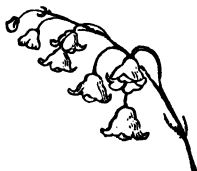
St. Prisca, V. M.

LITTLE is known of this blessed Martyr besides her name. She is supposed to have suffered about the year 270 ; her father is called “a man of Consular family” in an ancient martyrology. In another old writing, her age is said to have been thirteen years, and the tortures are described, which she underwent, before her agony was finished by the sword. But the account is of doubtful authority. It is sufficient for us to know that she certainly died for the love of Christ, and that of her sufferings, as of so many besides, unknown to us, there is a faithful record kept in the Book of Life. There is another St. Prisca, more commonly called Priscilla, who, with her husband Aquila, was a companion of St. Paul, and whom he salutes in his second Epistle to Timothy, under the name of Prisca. Aquila and Priscilla are believed to have ended their lives at Rome, but whether by martyrdom

or not is uncertain. That they were martyrs in will, if not in deed, St. Paul testifies in his Epistle to the Romans.

“ And was it meet, thou tender flower, on thy young life
to lay
Such burden, pledging thee to vows thou never canst
unsay?
What if the martyr's fire some day thy dainty limbs
devour?
What if beneath the scourge they writhe, or in dull
famine cower?
What if thou bear the Cross within, all ailing and
decay?
And 'twas I that laid it on thee—what if thou fall
away?”
Such is love's deep misgiving, when stronger far than
faith,
She brings her earthly darlings to the Cross for life or
death.

Lyra Innocentium.



JANUARY 20th.—250.

St. Fabian, Bishop and Martyr.

THE earliest notice which we have of this Saint is, that he came from the country to Rome during a vacancy of the see. When the brethren were all assembled in the church to choose a Bishop, a dove is said to have alighted on the head of the unknown stranger, when the whole assembly with one voice called out that he was worthy to be a Bishop. Little is known of his life, but St. Cyprian says that it was worthy of the glory of his death. It was he who sent forth St. Denys and his companions to convert the Heathens of Gaul.

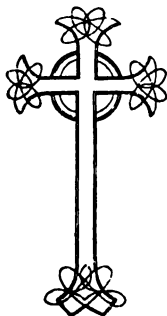
In the year 249, Decius became Emperor of Rome, and began a cruel persecution of the Christians. During his short reign many holy martyrs received their crown, and among them St. Fabian, who suffered in 250. The Priests and Deacons of Rome wrote a letter to St. Cyprian, giving him an account of their Bishop's

happy death. He replied in a letter filled with praises of the Martyr, and with consoling words to his sorrowing children.

Thus one doth vanquish strong-armed bands,
And o'er his torturers mightier rise,
Till e'en the judge astonished stands
With awe-struck eyes.

Lord, make us Thine own soldiers true,
That we may gain the spirit pure,
And for Thy Name, Thy Cross in view,
All things endure.

Hymns, Par. Brev. p. 282.



JANUARY 21st.—304.

St. Agnes, V. M.

THIS youthful Martyr suffered death in Rome during the cruel persecution of Diocletian. She was of high birth, and her parents seem to have been holy persons, who taught her the true faith of Christ in her childhood, and lived to see the reward of their pains in her blessed martyrdom.

When she was about thirteen, the son of Symphronius, the Prefect of Rome, asked her in marriage, but she had already dedicated herself to her heavenly Lord by a vow of celibacy. The young man was a Pagan, and when he discovered the love which Agnes bore to Christ, his anger was uncontrollable. He accused her of being a Christian, and she was brought before a judge, and ordered to burn incense to the gods. Persuasions and threats were tried in turn, but in vain. She was forcibly dragged to a smoking altar, and she stretched out her hand, but instead

of throwing incense on the fire, she made the sign of the health-giving cross.

When every thing had been tried to overcome her constancy, she was condemned to die, and she went joyfully, and as if in triumph, to the place of execution. Her head was struck off at a blow, and so was she for ever united to her heavenly Lord. "And thus," says St. Ambrose, "she, in whose tiny body there was hardly a place to receive a sword, had that in her which triumphed over it. At her age, children cannot endure even the angry countenances of their parents, and are wont to cry at the prick of a needle. But in the bloody hands of executioners she was undaunted, and fearless amid the rattling of chains. At last she yielded her body to the sword of the savage soldier, hardly knowing what it was to die, yet unmoved—scarcely able for the suffering, but ready for the victory—weak in the agony, and yet worthy of the crown. Bride never hastened to the nuptial chamber so joyously as Agnes to the place of death, her head adorned, not with plaited hair, but with Christ—crowned, not with flowers, but with holiness. All wept, she alone shed no tear. Marvellous was it to see her so prodigal of life, when she had scarcely tasted it, yet she gave it up as if she had done with it. She stood, she prayed, she bent her head. The headsman trembled and

grew pale at another's danger, but she blenched not at her own. In one victim ye have a double martyrdom, of purity and of religion. A virgin she remained, and she attained the glory of a martyr."

Her parents laid her body in a spot of ground, where they had their burying-place, a little way out of the city, and thither the Christians resorted in great numbers to do honour to her memory. The Pagans attacked them, and drove them away from the place amidst a shower of stones. Her foster-sister, Emeventiana, was killed, and her body was laid besides St. Agnes on the following night. Her sorrowing parents continued to visit her tomb in secret. One night they had a dream, they saw the blessed Martyr coming to them, and a spotless lamb was at her side. She told them of the glory which she had attained in heaven. In memory of this vision, St. Agnes is generally represented with a lamb standing near her.

St. Augustin, on the day of her feast, alludes to the various meanings of her name. "Blessed is the holy Agnes," says he, "whose passion we this day celebrate, for the maiden was indeed what she was called; for in Latin, Agnes signifies a lamb, and in Greek, it means pure. She was what she was called, and she was worthy of her name." She has ever been considered

as a model of virgin grace, second only to the blessed Virgin Mother of our Lord, and hence, in elder times, her feast was observed with peculiar honour by the women of England.

Joy to thy nurse, more joy to her who bare thee,
Lamb of that shepherd's flock, whose name is good :
As He hath now, for ever may He wear thee,
And keep thee purified with His dear blood !

"Amen : and therefore am I sworn His servant,
His sacred heart through life to be my rest,
To watch His eye with adoration fervent,
Foe of His foes, and in His white robe drest."

O blest, O safe, on God's own bosom leaning !
But passion-hours are nigh—keep thou thy place :
And far and wide are evil watchers gleaning,
The lambs that slight the shepherd's fostering grace.

"Nay, I will drink His cup ; my vow is taken ;
With His baptizing blood mine own shall blend,
Ne'er be that holiest charge by me forsaken,
The dying Saviour's trust to each true friend."

Well hast thou sworn, and be thy warfare glorious ;
But Saints are pure, 'the Church is undefiled,
And Jesus welcom'd from His Cross victorious
A Virgin Mother to a Virgin Child.

"Then ask for me of the dread Son of Mary,
Whose Arms Eternal are young children's home,
A loving heart, obedient eyes and wary,
Even as I am to tarry till He come."

Lyra Innocentium.

JANUARY 22nd.—304.

St. Vincent, Deacon and Martyr.

THIS most illustrious Martyr of the Spanish Church, was born at Saragossa, in Arragon. He was trained in the discipline of the Christian faith, by Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa, and was in due time ordained to the office of Deacon. Valerius was a man of venerable piety, but laboured under an impediment in his speech. He therefore devoted himself to prayer and meditation, and intrusted the care of teaching to St. Vincent, whom he also appointed his Archdeacon.

Dacian, who had already distinguished himself by his cruelty to the Christians, was then governor of Spain, under Diocletian and Maximian. The imperial edict for the seizure of the clergy, in which the laity were not included till the following year, had just been published in the end of 303. Valerius and his Deacon were accordingly loaded with chains, and carried to

Valencia, where the governor then was. The pains of hunger were added to their sufferings, in the hope of subduing their fortitude. When they were brought before Dacian, he first tried the effect of mild language, and promises of reward, if they would obey the orders of the emperors, and sacrifice to the gods. He reminded Valerius of the influence which his episcopal dignity gave him; and to Vincent he represented the honour of his family, which was a noble one, and the sweet joys of youth which still lay before him. But the confessors of Christ were not thus to be moved. Valerius, being unable from his infirmity to reply to the artful persuasions of the tempter, Vincent made a noble profession of the faith, in the name of them both. The Bishop was condemned to exile, where he seems afterwards to have finished his course by martyrdom; and Vincent was sent back to prison, thence to pass by a more painful, but a speedier way to his crown.

His body was stretched upon the rack, and cruelly torn with iron hooks; but no torture could shake his resolution, or disturb the calmness of his countenance. When his tormentors began to grow weary, Dacian ordered them to be beaten, suspecting that they had spared the Martyr. But the governor himself was at last moved to something like pity, and begged him

to buy his deliverance by at least giving up the Christian books. Vincent still continuing firm, was taken from the rack, and led to a more terrible torture called the "Question." It was an iron frame, with bars running across it, sharp as scythes, and underneath a fire was kindled, which made the whole frame red hot. To this fearful agony the Martyr walked with a willing step, and even went before his executioners. And as he lay bound upon the bed of torture, his eyes were fixed on heaven, his lips moved as if in prayer, and a peaceful smile would sometimes pass across his countenance. No cruelty was spared that fiendish malice could invent, but the love of Christ surpassed the wrath of man, and won the day.

When the malice of his enemies could do no more, he was carried back to prison, and laid in a dark dungeon, strewed with broken potsherds, which allowed his wounded body no rest. His feet too, were fastened in the stocks. But God was mindful of his servant, and, as it is recorded, sent His angels in visible presence to comfort him, bestowing a foretaste of his reward while his trust was yet unfinished. His cell was brightened with the light of heaven ; his bonds were loosed ; and the floor of his prison seemed to be strewed with flowers. The Martyr and his heavenly visitants sang hymns together, and the unwonted

sound astonished the gaoler. He looked into the cell ; and, overpowered by what he saw and heard, confessed the power of God, and the truth of the Christian faith. When Dacian heard of it, he shed tears of rage ; but finding it useless to continue his cruelty, he gave orders that some repose should be allowed to the Martyr. Perhaps he only meant to recruit the strength of Vincent for farther sufferings ; perhaps he feared that if he died under them, the Christian faith might be exalted in the eyes of the people, by his constancy. But whatever was his policy, God overruled it to obtain for his servant an easy departure. The scattered remnant of Christians gathered round him, and tended him with anxious care. They provided a soft bed, but he was no sooner laid upon it than he yielded up his soul to the Lord.

The rage of Dacian followed his poor remains. His body was first cast out into the field, and then taken out in a boat and thrown into the sea. During the night it was washed ashore ; and was at last privately buried by some Christians in a humble chapel near Valencia. When the fury of the persecution had ceased, it was removed with great honour, and buried under the altar of the principal Church.

O painful lesson, written in Thy blood !
To follow Thee ! O lesson full of pain !

And yet not painful if it is most good,
The pain shall pass away, the good remain.

Seek we soft beds to sleep on or to die?
With iron nails upon Thy torturing bed,
Thy naked limbs were viewed in agony,
And mockery stood by Thy dying Head.

Still as I gaze on Thee my tears will swell,
The things of which I glory drop away,
Nothing but of my sorrows would I tell,
So many are my sins, so short my day.

Baptistery, p. 260.

FEBRUARY 3rd.—316.

St Blasius, Bishop and Martyr.

ST. BLASIUS was Bishop of Sebaste, a city of Cappadocia, in the Lesser Asia. He spent a great part of his time in retirement on a hill not far from the city, whither he withdrew, after the duties of his office were finished, to be alone with God. During the persecution of Diocle-

tian, he lay for some time concealed in this retreat, but was at last taken and brought before Agricolaus, the governor of the province, and, confessing himself a Christian, was thrown into prison. After enduring many tortures, he received the crown of martyrdom, in the beginning of the fourth century. Seven holy women and two young children suffered at the same time.

Why loiterest within Simon's walls,
Hard by the barren sea,
Thou Saint! when many a sinner calls,
To preach and set him free?

Yet he who at the sixth hour sought
The lone house-top to pray,
There gained a sight beyond his thought,
The dawn of Gentile day.

Then reckon not, when perils lower,
The time of prayer mis-spent;
Nor meanest chance, nor place, nor hour,
Without it's heavenward bent.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 213.

FEBRUARY 5th.—251.

St. Agatha, V. M.

ST. AGATHA is supposed to have been born at Catania, in Sicily. She was certainly martyred there in the persecution of Decius.

She was the daughter of a noble and wealthy house in Sicily, and remarkable for her beauty and her gentleness. But her heart was, from her very earliest youth, consecrated to God. Quintianus, the Governor of Sicily, sought her in marriage, and so urgent was he in his suit, that she retired to Palermo to avoid his importunity. As it often happened in those days of Heathen cruelty, his love was turned into hatred when he discovered that she was a Christian. She was seized and brought to Catania, and all the way thither she could only weep and pray to the Lord to strengthen her for the conflict which awaited her. Every means was tried during the space of a month to shake her constancy, but she was supported by continual prayer, and at last came off victorious from this lingering martyrdom.

She was privately examined before Quintianus as to her faith, and confessed Christ with un-

daunted firmness, declaring the service of the Lord Jesus to be the highest nobility and the truest freedom. She went joyfully to prison, recommending herself to God, and imploring His aid. "Lord Jesus Christ, Lord of all things," said she, "Thou seest my heart, Thou knowest all my desire, do Thou possess me wholly. I am Thy sheep, Oh, strengthen me to overcome the devil." The next day she was tortured on the rack, and suffered all with calmness and constancy. After the most dreadful sufferings, she was sent back to prison, and kept without food and without any dressing for her wounds, which, it is said, were miraculously healed.

In four days after this, Agatha was again tortured, and on being sent back to prison, she raised her eyes and hands towards heaven, and thanked her Lord for having given her strength to endure every torment, and for having taken from her all love of the world, and of this passing life. And she prayed that, if it might be, He would now take her to Himself to enjoy His abundant mercy. Her prayer was heard, and she sweetly fell asleep in the Lord. The people buried her with great honour. Quintianus no sooner heard of her death, than he hastened to confiscate her goods. But the anger of Almighty God followed him, and he was drowned in crossing a river.

"Of the love of the heavenly life," says St. Gregory, "Solomon well says, Love is strong as death. For as death destroys the body, so the desire of eternal life kills the love of earthly things. For not even that Saint, whose birthday we this day celebrate, could have died in her body for her Lord, unless she had first died in mind to all earthly desires. For her soul, being raised up to the height of virtue, despised tortures, and contemned every reward. She stood before armed kings and governors, stronger than the striker, higher than the judge. What shall we, weak and slothful as we are, say when we see maidens going to the heavenly kingdom through the sword—we whom anger overcomes, whom pride puffs up, whom ambition disturbs, and luxury pollutes? If we cannot attain that heavenly kingdom through the war of persecutions, let this be our shame, that we will not follow God through peace. For to none of us does He say at this day, Die for Me; but only kill in thee all forbidden desires. We, then, who will not in peace subdue the desires of the flesh, how shall we be able in war to conquer the flesh itself for the Lord's sake?" So thought and so wrote St. Gregory the Great, a Saint himself, and first Bishop of the Christian Church. He it was who, in his charity, sent St. Augustine to convert our heathen forefathers to the

faith of Christ—what manner of persons would
he expect their children to be ?

What ? wearied out with half a life ?
Scar'd with this smooth unbloody strife ?
Think where thy coward hopes had flown,
Had heaven held out the martyr's crown.

How couldst thou hang upon the cross,
To whom a weary hour is loss ?
Or how the thorns and scourging brook,
Who shrinkest from a scornful look ?



FEBRUARY 14th.—270.

St. Valentine, Bishop and Martyr.

ST. VALENTINE was a Priest of the Roman Church, who was put in chains by Claudius II. for his religion. He preached the faith to his guard Asterius, and restored his adopted daughter to sight. Asterius was converted and baptized, with his whole household. Claudius, hearing this, condemned St. Valentine to be beaten with clubs, and afterwards beheaded.

But he, whose heart will bound to mark
The full bright burst of summer morn,
Loves, too; each little dewy spark,
By leaf or flow'ret worn :
Cheap forms, and common lines, 'tis true,
Through the bright shower-drop meet his view ;
The colouring may be of this earth,
The lustre comes of heavenly birth.

MARCH 1st.—544.

St. David, Archbishop.

ST. DAVID, or Dewi, the glory of the British Church, was born in 462. The Saxons had then overrun the greater part of England, and Vortigern, the British king, had been fain to buy life and liberty from them, by giving up the provinces now forming Essex, Sussex, Surrey, Norfolk, and Suffolk. The Church was also cruelly persecuted by these Pagan invaders.

The birth of David had been foretold thirty years before by St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, as he passed through Wales on his mission. It is said to have been revealed to him by an angel.

St. David was grandson to the king of one of the provinces of Wales, now called Cardigan. After an innocent and holy youth, spent under the care of his mother, his whole time being devoted to sacred learning, he was advanced to the Priesthood. He soon after retired to the island of

Veeta, probably the Isle of Wight, to be under the instruction of St. Paulinus, a disciple of St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, who lived there in great seclusion from the world. David stayed with him a long time, and besides attendance upon his teaching, he went about preaching and founding Monasteries.

Returning to his own country, he founded a religious house in the Vallis Rosina, afterwards called Ross. Boia, a Pagan chief who lived near, did all he could to deter the holy brotherhood from their purpose, but in vain. The Saint encouraged his spiritual children to persevere in their life of self-denial. He devoted himself wholly to the training of his Monks, and mingled little in public affairs. In a little while his house became very famous, and many rich and powerful men left their estates and retired into it to end their days. Their rule seems to have been nearly the same as that of St. Anthony and the Egyptian Monks. The brethren earned their livelihood by rural labour, and spent their leisure time in silent study, and in meditation upon divine things. In the evening they all left their work at the sound of a bell, and went into the Church, where they remained till the stars appeared. They then partook of a frugal supper in the refectory, consisting of bread and herbs and salt, with a little milk and water. Then

they went to rest till cock-crowing, when they rose to prayer, and continued in the Church till daylight dawned. Perfect obedience to the superior was enjoined, even in the smallest trifle, and frequent confession was also practised. All novices were subjected to a severe discipline and trial, in order to test their resolution to comply with the rule.

“At this time,” says an old writer, “the Church of God in Wales flourished and was honoured with many fruits. In many places Monasteries were founded, and congregations of religious were gathered with faithful devotion under the obedience of Christ. To all, David was a mirror and a pattern. He taught his children in Christ by word, and still more powerfully by his example. He was instruction to those who heard him—a guide to the religious—life to the needy—protection to the orphan—the stay of widows—the father of the young—to Monks a rule, and to Seculars a pattern—and all things to all men, that God might be glorified.” Another ancient historian has preserved a portrait of the holy man: “He was about six feet in height, and had an amiable and pleasing countenance; he was easy of access, and of great eloquence in speech.” St. David did good service to the Church in opposing the heresy of Pelagius, who was himself a native of Wales,

and whose principal error was the denial of original sin. St. David was afterwards made Bishop of Menevia, now called after him St. David's.

Little is known of the events of his episcopate, except that he sometimes visited Ireland, and sent many of his Monks thither, who became afterwards renowned for their sanctity, and were advanced to the highest offices in the Church.

He died (as is supposed) in 544, aged eighty-two years. As his last sickness increased, his biographers record that angelic voices might often be heard in his chamber, and visions seen of his future companions in glory. "On the last Sunday which he spent in this world, he preached to his people and to his clergy, and consecrated the adorable body of the Lord, with which he strengthened himself in his agony. And having finished the divine office he gave them his blessing, bidding them farewell, and saying that on the second day after, he should depart from the world to the Lord." "The whole of the remaining time," says the historian, "was spent by him in heavenly communings, and in the enjoyment of divine solaces." As the hour approached, the Lord Jesus seemed to come to him, and was welcomed by the blessed man with joy and with many tears. And as He was going away, he cried, "Lord, take me after Thee!" and so saying, he departed. Menevia,

or St. David's, was, till the time of Henry I., the metropolitan church of Wales, and exempt from the jurisdiction of Canterbury.

So keep thou, by calm prayer and searching thought,
Thy chrism pure, that still as weeks roll by,
And heaven rekindles, gladdening earth and sky,
The glow that from the grave our champion brought,
Pledge of high victory by His dread wounds wrought,
Thou mayest put on the garb of purity,
And from thy prayer look up with open eye,
Him owning, who from shame and sinful blot
Hath kept thee safe, nor suffered base desire
Thy soul to haunt, unhallowing the good hour.

Lyra Innocentium.

MARCH 2nd.—673.

St. Chad, Bishop.

ST. CHAD was one of four brothers, natives of Britain, who all devoted themselves to the service of the altar, and two of whom became Bishops. They were educated in the Monastery of Lindisfarne, on the coast of Northumbria, under the care of Aidan its founder, a holy Scottish Monk, by whom great part of the north

of England was converted. St. Chad was made Bishop of York in 666, but there arose afterwards some question as to his having been rightly consecrated, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore, decided in favour of St. Wilfrid, who had been previously appointed to the Bishopric. St. Chad meekly answered, "If you adjudge that I have not duly received the Episcopate, I willingly resign it, for indeed I never deemed myself worthy of it, but from obedience I consented, though so unworthy." Theodore, however, reserved him for the first vacant see, and in 670 he was made Bishop of Lichfield. While Bishop of York, he had devoted his whole care to his high office, "diligently visiting," says Bede, "the towns, and villages, and castles, and the country cottages, and hamlets in his diocese, preaching the Gospel, and going not on horseback, but, like the Apostles, on foot." As Bishop of the Mercians, or of Lichfield, he had a province comprising almost the whole of the midland counties. The Archbishop having in vain for some time entreated him to use a horse for greater expedition on his journeys, at last ordered one of his own horses to be brought, and insisted upon his taking it. Theodore is said also to have provided him with a kind of "horse waggon," which was probably the kind of carriage then used by persons of rank on peaceful journeys.

Thus provided, the holy man travelled diligently about the midland counties. He died 672, within three years after his appointment to the see of Lichfield, at which city he lived, with seven or eight of his clergy, in a private house, employing himself with them, whenever he was not visiting his diocese, in study and prayer. It is recorded of him that he was deeply moved to adore the power of God in the mysterious wonders of the wind and storm. If he heard the sound of it as he sat reading, he would stop to utter a prayer that God would be merciful to the children of men. As it increased, he would shut the book, and falling on his knees, remain fixed in inward prayer. But if it grew very violent, or thunder and lightning shook the earth and air, then he would go to the church, and pass the time in earnest supplications and psalms. "Have you not read," he would say, "how it is written, The Lord thundered out of heaven, and the Highest uttereth His voice? God moves the clouds, wakens the winds, shoots the lightning and thunder from heaven, that he may arouse the dwellers upon earth to dread Him, and put into their hearts the remembrance of the doom that is to come to bend their haughty boldness, and drive away their pride. Therefore it is our part to answer his heavenly warnings with due fear and love, to implore his mercy, and examine

the secrets of our hearts, that we may not be stricken by His hand when it is stretched forth to judge the world."

How beautiful your presence, how benign,
Servants of God! who not a thought will share
With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!
Such Priest, when service worthy of his care
Has called him forth to breathe the common air,
Might seem a saintly image from its shrine
Descended—happy are the eyes that meet
The apparition; evil thoughts are stayed
At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat
A benediction from his voice or hand;
Whence grace, through which the heart can understand;
And vows, that bind the will, in silence made.

Wordsworth's Eccles. Sketches, xix.



MARCH 7th.—203.

St. Perpetua, Martyr.

ST. PERPETUA and five Catechumens, her companions, suffered martyrdom, probably at Carthage, about the year 203, in the reign of the Emperor Severus. Perpetua was a young married woman, about twenty-two years old, of an honourable family ; nothing is known about her husband, who was probably in hiding on account of his religion. Her mother and two brothers seem to have been Christians, but her father was a heathen, and did all he could by prayers and threats to overcome her constancy. A poor young woman, named Felicitas, who was also married, was one of Perpetua's companions, and, like her, full of holy constancy.

The Martyrs were first confined in a private house, where they were baptized, and, as Perpetua tells us in her acts, which she wrote herself, they prayed to the Lord to grant them patience to suffer all that was to come upon

them. They were afterwards shut up in a dark prison, where Perpetua suffered much from the heat, the rudeness of the soldiers, and from anxiety for her infant child. They were afterwards moved to a more convenient place. There Perpetua had a dream or vision of a golden ladder reaching from earth to heaven, so narrow that only one person could mount it at a time, and armed at its sides with many sharp cutting instruments. A watchful dragon lay at its foot to frighten those who would go up. Saturus (one of the martyrs, who had been the teacher of the rest) mounted first, and turning round when he had reached the top, said to her, "Perpetua, I wait for you, but beware of the dragon." And she answered, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ he shall not hurt me." And as she placed her foot upon the first step of the ladder, she seemed to tread upon his head. When she reached the top, she saw a venerable man in the guise of a shepherd, feeding his flock, and round him stood many thousands clad in white. He raised his head and looked on her, and said, "You are welcome, my child." And he fed her with the milk of the flock, and those who stood by said, "Amen." At the sound of their voices she awoke. Then she understood that it was her Lord's will that she should die for Him.

While in prison her father made another fruit-

less effort to make her deny her faith, throwing himself at her feet, kissing her hands, and beseeching her by his grey hairs, by her mother, and by her child.

At last they were brought before the governor, who entreated Perpetua to save her life, by offering sacrifice to idols. Her father pressed forward in his eagerness to second the governor's words, and was beaten off by his order. Perpetua felt this more than any of her own sufferings. As nothing could shake her constancy, nor that of her companions, they were condemned to the wild beasts, and sent back to prison till the season of the shows. Perpetua was then separated from her child, by order of her own father, who hoped by this means to overcome her resolution.

One of this blessed company, Secundulus, died in prison before the shows began, which were to be held in honour of the birthday of the Emperor Geta.

Felicitas gave birth to a child just before they were called to their martyrdom. When she cried out in pain, the gaoler asked her how she would bear to have the beasts let loose upon her. She answered, "I alone suffer what I suffer now, but then, another shall be in me, who will suffer for me, for I shall then suffer for Him."

On the evening before their martyrdom, they

supped, as was customary, in public, and when the people pressed round to see them, Saturus said, "Surely, good friends, to-morrow will be time enough to gaze on us. Yet mark our countenances well, that ye may know them again at the awful day of doom."

They walked joyfully to the Amphitheatre, Perpetua with a serene countenance, her eyes cast down to avoid the rude gaze of the crowd, and Felicitas giving thanks that she was strong enough to suffer with the rest. When they entered the Amphitheatre the people were so provoked by their calm and triumphant bearing, that they cried out that they should be scourged. After suffering this additional cruelty, Saturus was first exposed to a furious wild boar, which turned from him upon its keeper, whom it wounded mortally. A bear also refused to touch him, and he was dispatched at last by a leopard's bite. The first was he of the little company, as Perpetua had foreseen, to mount the heavenly ladder. As he departed, he said to Pudens, a soldier, and himself afterwards a martyr, who stood near : "Farewell, remember my faith."

Saturninus and Revocatus, two other of the band, were then torn by a leopard and a bear. The two women suffered last. They were tossed by a wild cow. Perpetua was first attacked, and fell heavily on her back. She did her best to

arrange her torn and disordered dress, being more mindful of modesty than of pain. She even bound up her dishevelled hair, lest she should seem forlorn in her hour of victory. She also raised and supported her weak companion, and the people, moved at last at the pitiful sight, cried out to spare them and they were taken away. So mightily did the love of Christ triumph in this feeble woman, that the whole scene of her agony seemed to her but as a dream.

They were put to death in the Spoliarium, a place where the wounded were dispatched by young gladiators. Perpetua was cruelly tortured by an inexperienced youth, who wounded her many times before striking the mortal blow.

St. Perpetua continued writing her acts, or the account of her sufferings, till the evening before they ended in martyrdom.

Yes—strive, thou world, in thy rash tyrant-mood,
To slake that burning cross in blood ;
It will but brighter burn,
As martyrs' eyes more and more near discern
Where on the Father's right hand beaming,
Light upon light in glory streaming,
The Saviour, felt, not seen, in life,
Deigns to be seen in that last strife,
And angels hail, approaching to the shore,
Rays like their own, and more.

MARCH 12TH.—604.

St. Gregory, the Great Bishop of Rome.

ST. GREGORY was the son of a wealthy Roman Senator, named Gordianus, and was born at Rome in 540. His mother, Sylvia, after his father's death, retired from the world into a small cell or oratory, where she gave herself wholly to prayer.

Gregory at first applied himself to human learning, and held a high office in the state, but he cared not for worldly honours, even while they surrounded him, and spent much of his time with a holy man named Constantinus, a disciple of St. Benedict, from whom he probably learned to love a monastic life.

On his father's death he gave up his worldly employments, and bestowed all his wealth upon the foundation of seven monasteries, in one of which he took the vows of a Monk. His time was now devoted chiefly to prayer, to reading, and dictating. He injured his health by the

severity of his fasting, which brought on a great weakness of body, from which he suffered as long as he lived.

In the year 577, St. Gregory was happily inspired with a zeal for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. His compassion was called forth by a sight which no Christian could behold unmoved. A number of merchants had arrived with a large importation of foreign merchandize ; and a crowd of people flocking to the market-place to see what was there for sale, Gregory came among the rest, and saw some boys set forth to be sold as slaves. The fairness of their complexion, handsome form, and flaxen hair, so different from the dark olive hue and jetty locks of the Italians, struck him as remarkable. He inquired from whence they came ; and being told from Britain, where the natives were commonly of that complexion, he asked further whether those islanders were Christians or Pagans. When he heard that they were Pagans, he sighed deeply : " Alas, for grief !" he said, " that such bright faces should be under the dominion of the prince of darkness." In answer to his next question, learning that their nation was called Angles, " It is well," said Gregory ; " Angels they are in countenance, and ought to be co-heirs with angels in heaven." Thus he continued to sport with the names of the province from which they

came, and the king in whose territory they were born, Ælla, King of Deorna or "Deerland," a name given by the Saxons to the northern part of Yorkshire, saying that "de ira" from the wrath of God they should be delivered, that they might learn to sing Allelujahs to His name. Under this playful mood he concealed a more serious feeling ; for from that day he determined himself to go on a mission to England. This was some years before his election to the See of Rome ; but his character was then so publicly esteemed by his countrymen, that they would not let him leave them.

St. Gregory was elected Bishop of Rome sorely against his will, in the year 590. During his pontificate, he laboured unceasingly to restore peace and unity to the Church, then torn by manifold divisions. He stood pre-eminent among the Bishops of the age, and distant churches and kingdoms appealed to him to settle their disputes. At home he set his clergy the example of a holy life, and to all he was a pattern of charity and humility.

Among all his other cares St. Gregory did not forget the poor Pagans of England. He instructed the agent of his estates in France to redeem the Saxon youths, whom he might find in slavery in that country, that they might be placed in monasteries, and trained in Christian

knowledge, to go afterwards as missionaries to their own country. And he sent Augustin, a Roman Monk, at the head of forty missionaries, from his own monastery, to make their way to Britain. In the month of July, 596, they left Rome on their errand of love to our fathers, more than twenty years after the first thought of this charitable work had arisen in the heart of St. Gregory. Truly might St. Bede say, "If Gregory is not an Apostle to others, he is to us, for the seal of his Apostleship are we in the Lord." The events of this mission we shall read in the life of St. Augustin of Canterbury.

During the remaining years of his pontificate, Gregory was unceasingly employed in preserving order and discipline throughout the church. He reformed the Liturgy, and added four new tones or chants to the four which had been introduced by St. Ambrose from the East. These are now called the Gregorian tones. The Saint used to teach the singing boys of his choir himself, even when confined to his bed by weakness. After a life of unwearied diligence in the service of his heavenly master, St. Gregory slept in the Lord. His last care was for the Church, and particularly for his English mission. He left many voluminous writings, and was compared to Antony for holiness, Cyprian for eloquence, and Augustin for wisdom.

In his humility he used to subscribe himself, "Servant of the servants of God," which has now become the usual style and title of the Bishops of Rome.

A bright-haired company of youthful slaves,
Beautiful strangers, stand within the pale
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,
Where Tiber's stream the immortal city laves;
ANGLI by name; and not an angel waves
His wing who seemeth lovelier in heaven's eye
Than they appear to holy Gregory;
Who, having learnt that name, salvation craves
For them, and for their land. The earnest Sire,
His questions urging, feels in slender ties
Of chiming sound commanding sympathies;
DE-IRIANS—he would save them from God's ire;
Subjects of Saxon ÆLLA—they shall sing
Glad Hallelujahs to the eternal King!

Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Sketches, xiii.



MARCH 18TH.—778.

St. Edward, King and Martyr.

ST. EDWARD THE MARTYR was the son of Edgar, King of England, and his Queen Ethelfrida, who died when he was born. In 975 Edward succeeded his father, owing his crown principally to the influence of St. Dunstan, which prevailed over that of his step-mother, Elfrida, who wished to raise her own son, Ethelred, a child of seven years old, to the throne.

St. Edward showed the greatest affection towards Elfrida and her son, leaving them to enjoy all the pomp of royalty, and devoting himself to a life of holy retirement. But Elfrida could not rest till she had accomplished his death.

In 978, as Edward was returning from hunting, he dismissed his followers, and went a little out of the way to visit his stepmother, at Corfe Castle, in the Isle of Purbeck. She welcomed him with feigned courtesy, and while he was

drinking a cup of wine, as he sat on horseback ready to depart, one of her servants stabbed him from behind with a dagger. Though dreadfully wounded, he galloped off to overtake his attendants ; but falling from his saddle, and one foot remaining in the stirrup, he was dragged for a long way through the forest, and was at last discovered by the track of blood. By the orders of the Queen, he was privately buried at Werham, in unhallowed ground. His enemies made a public show of joy, "as if"—says the historian—"they had buried his memory with his body."

Soon afterwards, however, it is said, wonderful sights were seen round his dishonoured grave, and diseases healed there by the power of God, thus bearing witness to the sanctity of His servant. Hence he was called a Martyr, as having died innocently, and been honoured after death by miracles.

Elfrida became afterwards truly penitent, and resigning her royal state, she founded a Convent at Wherwell, in Hampshire, and retired thither from the world to bewail her sins.

To them whose pride and glory here
Lies buried in Christ's sepulchre,
To pass from this our sky-arched room,
Is but a leaving of the tomb.

If sensual leanings first shall cease,
Then to go hence is but release.
When alms and prayers have gone before,
And daily strivings to be poor,
Disrobe us of mortality,
And in the heart's core breed that sigh
Which pierces heaven, and from above
Brings down the pledged immortal love.

Baptistery, p. 187.

MARCH 21st.—543.

St. Benedict, Abbot.

ST. BENEDICT, an Italian of honourable birth, was the great founder of the Monastic life in the West. St. Benedict was sent in his youth to study at Rome, but shocked at the vicious lives of his companions, he retired to a place called Subiaco, about forty miles distant, and shut himself up in a cave. On his way thither he met Romanus, a holy Monk, who clothed him in a Monastic habit, and assisted him as he was able. He visited him daily, and carried him a portion of his own food. No one else knew his hiding place. The cave was near the top of a very steep rock, and from the side on which the

Monastery of Romanus lay, inaccessible ; so he tied the bread which he had brought to a cord, and rang a little bell to let the Saint know that he was come.

The shepherds in that savage region at first mistook St. Benedict for a wild beast, dressed as he was in skins ; but when they came to know him, they revered him greatly, and many of them came to him to be taught, and left off their savage manners.

In the course of time, so many disciples joined him, desiring to be under his rule, that he built twelve Monasteries, in each of which he placed twelve Monks, under a superior. A few who had most need of instruction he kept with himself.

The object of the Monastic life was to help people to follow more exactly the counsels of the Gospel. Those who adopted it forsook the world, and united in communities, binding themselves to live a single life, in poverty and obedience, with prayer, fasting, and contemplation. The origin of this way of living may be traced to the first times of the Church, when Christians, being cast out of the world, lived in a spiritual family, separate from home and kindred. In the book of Acts we read that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul ; neither said any of them

that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." This Christian community was the type of the Monastic orders. During times of persecution this manner of life arose from necessity ; but it was also a living realization of the great laws of charity, humility, and devotion, upon which the perfection of the Christian character is founded. Therefore, in after times, when persecution ceased, there were many who still desired to continue the same mode of life, with even stricter personal obligations. What was before a free choice was then made a perpetual resolution, whence arose the vows of poverty and devotion.

A Priest from envy invented many wicked slanders against him, and for the sake of peace he retired to Cassino, a small town in Campania, where he destroyed a temple of Apollo, to which the peasants used to resort for their false worship. He began to preach Christ to them, and afterwards built their the Monastery of Monte Cassino, where he composed his famous rules, and spent the remnant of his life in training his Monks in the paths of perfection.

St. Benedict had a sister, named Scholastica, who had been consecrated to God from her infancy. She lived in a Convent not far from

Monte Cassino, and once a year they met in a house near the gate of St. Benedict's Monastery, and spent a day in praising God, and in holy discourse together. When she died he gave thanks to God for her happy passage, and caused her body to be removed to his own Monastery, and laid in the tomb which he had prepared for himself, that, as St. Gregory says, "the grave might not separate their bodies, whose souls had ever been one with God."

The Saint himself did not long survive her. He foretold his death to some of his disciples, and six days before it he desired that his tomb might be opened and made ready for him. A violent fever seized him, and on the sixth day he was carried into the oratory of the Convent, and there strengthened himself by receiving the Blessed Body and Blood of the Lord. And raising his hands to heaven, in the arms of his spiritual children, he yielded up his spirit on the 21st of March, being the eve of the Sunday of the Passion, which is the fifth in Lent.

His departure is said to have been made known on the same day to two Monks, at a great distance, by this beautiful vision. They beheld a bright pathway, leading from the Monastery heavenwards, and, as they looked, a venerable person asked them for whom this was prepared. They answered that they could not

tell. "It is the way," replied he, "by which the holy Benedict, beloved of God, has just passed to heaven." His history is related by St. Gregory the Great.

Thrice happy they who earthly stores have sold,
Dearer sublunar joys, domestic ties,
And form themselves into one happy fold,
To imitate on earth the happy skies,
With vigil, prayer, and sacred litanies ;
Their souls to heavenly contemplation given,
While earthly hope within them buried lies,
Their sole employ to purge the evil leaven,
And render their cleansed souls a fit abode for
heaven.

Baptistery, p. 15.



APRIL 3RD.—1253.

St. Richard, Bishop.

ST. RICHARD was born at Wyche, about four miles from Worcester ; his parents were both of gentle blood. He applied himself to study at Oxford, Paris, and Bologna.

On his return from his travels, he was honoured with the friendship of the holy Archbishop St. Edmund of Canterbury, who made him his Chancellor. On the death of St. Edmund, St. Richard went to study theology at Orleans, where he was ordained Priest.

He was consecrated Bishop of Chichester in 1245, but King Henry III., who had wished to appoint a very unfit person to the Bishopric, was so much enraged at St. Richard's election, that he confiscated all his revenues.

He was reduced to the greatest poverty, and there was but one man bold enough to brave the King's anger, and receive the persecuted Bishop

into his house. This was Symon de Ferring, a gentleman of Sussex. Undisturbed by all his outward troubles, St. Richard began to visit his people, going from town to town, and from one village to another, preaching and ministering the Sacraments of the Church. Whenever he went to Windsor, to ask his dues from the King, he was treated with great insolence by the court menials ; but he bore all meekly and firmly, and at the end of two years King Henry relented and restored to him his manors.

The historian of his life tells us that St. Richard was such a Bishop as St. Paul described in his Epistle to Titus. His kindness and pity to the poor and distressed endeared him to all. "He preached often, soothing the contrite, guiding those who came to confession, reforming the desperate, encouraging the willing, and strengthening the trembling." He was most severe to himself, though so gentle to others, and spent a great part of his time in prayer. Thus did he feed the flock of God, and guide their footsteps and his own on the lowly path to heaven.

In 1253 he was employed in preaching a crusade against the Saracens, and during his progress consecrated a church at Dover, on Mid-Lent Sunday. It was connected with a hospital, called "God's House," the ruins of which still

remain, and a cemetery for the poor. In his sermon he commended his departure, which he foretold was very near, to the prayers of the people. On the next day, while singing the office, he fainted, and was carried to bed. His strength rapidly declined, and the last rites of the Church were performed. As he lay waiting for his change, Symon de Ferring came to visit him, and reminded him of the Passion of the Lord, which was approaching. Richard replied, "Friday will be a joyful day to me." He would often embrace the crucifix, saying, "I thank Thee, O my Lord Jesu, for all the benefits Thou hast conferred upon me, and for the sufferings and the shame which Thou didst bear, and which caused Thee to cry out, 'Is there any sorrow like unto My sorrow?'" Thus, surrounded by a company of religious, Priests and Clerks, he departed on the 3rd of April, 1253, in the 57th year of his age, and the seventh of his Episcopate.

His remains were borne in solemn state to the Cathedral Church of Chichester. The train of mourners, as they passed through the towns and villages on their way, sang psalms from the office for the dead, and the people came out to meet them, and accompanied them a little way. And so they bore the blessed body to Chichester, and buried it first before the altar of St. Ed-

mund, whence it was afterwards removed to a more honourable place. There it still rests under a stately shrine, which has lately been restored from the decay and ruin into which it had fallen. Many miracles were recorded of him. Of one of them there is an account in Latin on the wall of the south transept of the cathedral.

O aged Saint ! far off I heard
The praises of thy name ;
Thy deed of power, thy skilful word,
Thy zeal's triumphant flame.

I came and saw ; and having seen,
Weak heart, I drew offence
From thy prompt smile, thy simple mien,
Thy lowly diligence.

The Saint's is not the hero's praise ;—
This have I found, and learn
Nor to profane heaven's humblest ways,
Nor its least boon to spurn.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 92.



APRIL 4TH.—397.

St. Ambrose, Bishop and Confessor.

ST. AMBROSE was born at Treves, the residence of the pretorian prefect of Gaul, his father then holding that office. He applied himself to learning, became famous as a pleader, and in 373 was appointed by the Emperor Valentinian I. to the government of Liguria and Emilia, embracing all the north of Italy. As he departed, Probus, the pretorian prefect of Italy, who was a Christian, addressed these remarkable words, "Go, govern not as a judge, but as a Bishop." St. Ambrose was not yet baptized, though his elder sister, Marcellina, had already devoted herself to the religious life, and passed her time in constant prayer and mortification. The Bishop of Milan dying, in 374, a dispute arose as to the appointment of his successor. Ambrose, as governor of the province, entered the Church where the contest was going on, and tried to

convince the unruly assembly of the duty of preserving peace and charity. While he was speaking, a child, as it is said, cried out three times "Ambrose is Bishop." The whole multitude took up the cry, and he was unanimously elected. In vain did he protest that he was only a catechumen and a layman—in vain did he try every means to persuade them of his unfitness for the office, and twice even make his escape from the city. He was brought back again, and finally persuaded to yield to what seemed the evident will of God. He was forthwith baptized, and notwithstanding his earnest entreaties for delay, consecrated on the eighth day after his baptism.

His first act was to give all his goods to the poor. His lands he bestowed on the Church, reserving the rents for his sister Marcellina, during her lifetime. He applied himself to the deep study of Holy Scripture and ecclesiastical writers. He set himself severe rules of living, spending nights in watching, and fasting on all days except the Sabbath or Saturday, and the Lord's Day. His chamber was ever open to all who wished to see and speak with him, and he exercised hospitality liberally, but was never seen at the entertainments of others.

St. Ambrose was greatly disturbed during his Episcopate by the Arian heretics. On the first

news of his appointment, St. Basil, of Cæsarea, wrote thus to him : " Proceed, thou man of God, fight the good fight, set right the infirmities of the people wherever the Arian madness has seized them ; renew the foot-prints of the fathers, and by frequent letters build up thy love towards us, of which thou hast already laid the foundation."

The Empress Justina at that time governed Milan and the rest of Italy for her son Valentinian, who was Emperor of the West, but was yet a boy. She was an Arian, and she wished to obtain one of the churches of Milan for the use of the Arians. For this purpose she summoned Ambrose, the Bishop, to her palace, and there, in presence of her court, she asked him to give up the church of St. Victor, which was without the walls, for the Arian worship.

His duty was plain. The churches were the property of Christ : he was appointed by Christ to take charge of them, and was therefore bound not to give up what was committed to him in trust.

Justina made several attempts to remove the Bishop. She tried to raise the people against him, and to have him carried off by force, but none of her attempts succeeded.

This was in the month of March ; as Easter drew near, she proceeded to stronger measures

On April 4th, the Friday before Palm Sunday, she again demanded a church for the Arians, but changed her request from St. Victor's church, to the new church within the walls of the town, which was larger than the other. It was dedicated to the Apostles, and was built in the form of a cross. When the Bishop refused, the messenger of the Empress asked again for St. Victor's church, but with no better success than before.

On Palm Sunday, after the Lessons and Sermon had been read in the church where Ambrose performed the service, he was engaged in teaching the Creed to the candidates for Baptism, who, according to custom, had been catechized during Lent, and were to be admitted into the Church on the night before Easter Day. News was brought him that the officers of the court had taken possession of the church of St. Victor, in the name of the Emperor, and that the people were flocking there. Ambrose continued the service of the day; but whilst he was administering the Holy Communion, a second message came, that one of the Arian Priests had been seized by the people, who could not bear that the church should be given up to the Arians.

"On this news," he says, writing to his sister, "I could not keep from shedding many bitter

tears ; and while I made oblation, I prayed that no blood might be shed in Christ's quarrel, or if so, that it might be mine, and that not for my people only, but for the ungodly."

At the same time he sent a number of his clergy to the spot, who succeeded in saving the unhappy man from the mob.

Ambrose spent the rest of Palm Sunday in the same church where he had performed the morning's service ; at night he went to his own house, that the Empress might have the opportunity of seizing him there, if she chose to do it. She sent for him again, and he describes what then passed in these words :

"I had a meeting with the officers of the court, who urged me to give up the church without delay, on the ground that the Emperor was but acting on his undoubted rights, as possessing sovereign power over all things. I made answer, that if he asked me for what was my *own*, for instance, my estate, my money, or the like, I would make no resistance, though, to tell the truth, all that was mine was the property of the poor, but that the Emperor had no sovereignty over things sacred. If my estate is demanded, seize upon it ; my person, here I am. Would you take me to prison or to death ? I go with pleasure. Far be it from me to call on the multitude to defend me, or to clasp the altar in sup-

plication for my life; rather I will be a sacrifice for the altar's sake."

The Empress laid a fine of two hundred pounds of gold upon the tradesmen of the city who supported their Bishop, and threw many of them into prison.

On the Wednesday in Passion-week, soldiers were sent before day-break to take possession of the new Church within the walls. In the meantime, Ambrose was performing the service at the church of St. Victor. He was requested to go to the new church, but wishing to draw away the people from thence in order to avoid a tumult, he remained in St. Victor's, and began a comment on the Lesson of the day, which was from the book of Job.

Before this time the soldiers, who had been sent to the new church, had left it, and joined the Bishop's congregation. Soon after, a message came to him from the Empress, to ask him whether he meant to rule over his sovereign. Ambrose, in answer, showed the pains he had taken to observe a due submission to the Emperor, and to hinder disturbance among the people. Then he added, "Priests have by old right bestowed sovereignty, never assumed it; and it is a common saying that sovereigns have coveted the priesthood, more than priests the sovereignty. Christ hid Himself, lest He should be made a

King. Yes, we have a dominion of our own. The dominion of the Priest lies in his helplessness; as it is said, 'When I am weak, then am I strong.'"

And so ended the dispute for a time. On Good Friday the Empress gave way; she ordered the soldiers to give up the church, and withdrew the fines that she had laid upon the citizens.

However, though Justina gave up her attempt for the present, she renewed it in January of the next year, 386, having first strengthened her cause by a new law, that she might have the more hold against the Bishop. He was again called upon to give up St. Victor's church to the Arians, and on his refusing again, he received a message from the Empress that he should leave the city at once, with any friends who chose to attend him. He replied to this, that he could not forsake his flock, but would stay at Milan till he was put to death, or carried away by force.

He explained to his people what he had determined to do, and told them that he would not desert them freely, but that he must submit to the Emperor, and should make no resistance to any punishment he might choose to inflict. He also told them that he had been asked to give up the church-plate, and he had answered, that

whatever was his own he was ready to give up, but he could not withdraw any property from God's temple, nor give up what was put into his charge to preserve.

He reminded them of the Lesson for that day, about Naboth and his vineyard, and said he could much less give up the Church of Christ, than Naboth the inheritance of his fathers. There had been many faithful Bishops in Milan, and the church was their inheritance.

He said that he did not seek to raise defenders to himself, or to be protected by force, he only wished for the prayers of the poor. He was accused of misleading the people by the verses of his hymns. Of this he says, "Truly they have in them a high strain, above all other influence; for can any strain have more of influence than the confession of the Holy Trinity, which is proclaimed day by day by the voice of the whole people? Each is eager to rival his fellows in confessing, as he well knows how, in sacred verses, his faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

He here makes mention of the psalmody that he introduced into his church. It was about this time that soldiers were sent, as in the former year, to surround the church of St. Victor, in order to prevent the Catholic service there; but being themselves Christians, and afraid of excommuni-

cation, they went so far as to allow the people to enter, but would not let them leave the building. This was not so great an inconvenience to them as might appear at first sight, for belonging to it there was a range of buildings, and within these the people remained shut up some days, and the Bishops with them.

In order to keep the people quiet, and to direct their minds to higher objects than those around them, he employed them in psalmody. Sacred chanting, such as we now use in our cathedrals, is reported to have been introduced into the church of Antioch by Ignatius, the disciple of St. Peter, in the "glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," which we still repeat; and since his time, it had been continued in the church, and had been used by those who acknowledged the true doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in bearing witness to that doctrine against the Arian heretics. Ambrose now instructed his people at Milan in the chants which had been so long used in the Eastern Churches, and called on them thus to give glory to the Holy Trinity. The soldiers were affected by the music, and took part in it, and it appears that in the end the people were allowed to depart quietly.

The young Emperor Valentinian, in whose name the Empress Justina governed, was not

insensible to the firmness of Ambrose, and during the few years that passed before his death, he showed a very different feeling towards his Bishop. Whilst he was still young, an enemy rose up against him in another part of his kingdom, and when he was engaged in resisting this rebel, he wrote to St. Ambrose to come to him, both to help him with his advice and to baptise him (as he had not yet been baptized); but before Ambrose could arrive, the Emperor had been murdered.

The firmness of St. Ambrose was tried on another occasion by the Emperor Theodosius, who succeeded Valentinian. This Emperor reigned as a most wise and excellent Prince, and as a true Christian, but his temper was naturally passionate, and he once gave way to it in a fearful degree. A tumult had taken place in the year 390, at the town of Thessalonica, and the people had committed excesses which deserved punishment; but Theodosius in his anger, and by the encouragement of his counsellors, ordered the people of the town to be assembled, surrounded by soldiers, and massacred, to the number of seven thousand. Before the order was executed, the Emperor had recalled it, but it was then too late.

These events took place in the early spring, and soon afterwards Theodosius returned to

Milan. Ambrose had been in the habit of coming to him as soon as he arrived there, but now he retired into the country two or three days beforehand. From thence he wrote to the Emperor a letter of most earnest and respectful exhortation, entreating him to repent of the rash act which he had been persuaded to commit.

“O Emperor,” he said, “why should you feel shame to act as David acted? he who was a Prophet as well as a King, and a forefather of Christ according to the flesh. A parable was set before him, and when he found that by it he himself was condemned, he said, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ Take it not ill, then, O Emperor, if the same words are used towards you as the Prophet used to David, ‘Thou art the man.’ For if you give due attention to them, and answer, ‘I have sinned against the Lord;’ if you utter that royal and prophetic strain, ‘O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker,’ then it will be said to you, ‘Since it repenteth thee, the Lord putteth away thy sin: thou shalt not die.’

“I have written this, not to overpower you, but to persuade you, by a royal example, to put away this sin from your kingdom, that is, by humbling your soul to God. You are a man ;

temptation has come upon you ; get the better of it. Tears and penitence are the only remedy for sin ; neither Angel nor Archangel can wash it away : the Lord Himself, Who alone can say, 'I am with you always,' even He pardons not, except upon penitence."

With these and many other words of affection and anxiety, the Bishop addressed Theodosius in this letter, speaking at the end of the Emperor's children, whom he tenderly loved, and asking God's blessing on them and on the Emperor himself.

We do not hear how Theodosius received this remonstrance, but when Ambrose had returned to the city, and was performing Divine Service there, the Emperor came to attend it. Ambrose met him at the entrance of the Church, and reminded him of the sin which he had committed, and which made him unfit to enter the house of God, or to receive the Holy Communion. Theodosius submitted to the warning of his Bishop, and went home, where he remained suspended from Christian Communion for eight months.

When Christmas came, he made another attempt to join in public worship. His counsellor Ruffinus, who had been the adviser of the massacre, had found him in tears, and on inquiring the cause of his grief, had been reminded of his

state of separation from the church. "Slaves and beggars," said the Emperor, "may enter freely to join in prayer; but against me the gates of heaven are shut: for well I know what the Lord has so clearly said, 'Whom ye bind shall be bound in heaven.'" (St. John, xx.)

Ruffinus persuaded him to let him go to Ambrose, and Theodosius, impatient at his delay, set out towards the church before his return. Before he reached it, he was met by Ruffinus, returning unsuccessful from the Bishop, on which, with a noble resolution, he declared that he would proceed onwards, and undergo the shame which he had deserved.

The Bishop's apartments were contained within a range of buildings, of which the church formed a part, and thither, not to the church, Theodosius now went. He promised the Bishop to express his repentance publicly, and to make a law, that henceforward thirty days should always pass between a sentence of death and its execution.

The first time he appeared at public worship after receiving his Bishop's absolution, he threw himself prostrate on the pavement, saying, in the words of the Psalmist: "My soul cleaveth to the dust; quicken Thou me, according to Thy word."

Thus heartily and humbly he repented, and

increased in reverence and affection towards his Bishop.

When St. Ambrose fell sick of his last illness, all his friends tried to persuade him to pray for his own recovery. But he answered, "I have not lived among you so that I am ashamed to live, nor do I fear to die, for we have a good Master."

While he lay on his bed waiting for his change, he seemed to see the Lord Jesus coming to him with a pleasant countenance. From five o'clock till midnight on Good Friday he lay motionless, his hands stretched out in the form of a cross, and his lips moving as if in prayer, though the words were inaudible. "Having received the body of the Lord, he gave up his spirit in the morning of the holy Sabbath, in the fifty-eighth year of his age."

To thee an eye to trace out the third heaven
In holy writ, and see the mercy-throne—

A brother's love—a poet's lyre was given;
But yet o'er all thy gifts the Pastor shone,
To God's high altar bound, no more thine own.

I see thee stand before the injured shrine,
While Theodosius to thy stern decree
Falls down, and owns the keys and power divine;
For Kings that fain her nursing sires would be,
To the Eternal Bride must bow the knee.

I see thee thron'd upon the Teacher's seat—
And 'mid the crowd a silent wanderer steal ;
In his sad breast, while sitting at thy feet
The Father doth the Eternal Son reveal,
And Austin from thy hands receives the Spirit's seal.

Cathedral, p. 287.

APRIL 19TH.—1012.

St. Alphege, Archbishop and Martyr.

ST. ALPHEGE was born of a noble family in Britain about 954. While he was still very young, he renounced the world, and retired into a Monastery in Gloucestershire. He was afterwards Abbot of a religious house at Bath, which had fallen into great irregularities, and was reformed under his discipline. He was made Bishop of Winchester by St. Dunstan, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and there, as in his Monastery, was a pattern of holiness and self-discipline. His chief care was for the poor, so that it was said that, during his Episcopate, there was not a beggar in all his diocese. "Behold the Jew and the Pagan," he would say, "how

they are bound together in the ties of their religion; see how none of them are oppressed with penury, whom they do not at once relieve. But they see us destitute of this virtue, to which the Pagans are drawn by natural pity, and the Jews by divine command, and they blasphemously revile Christ, and the faith of Christians, and their hopes of future blessedness." The poor he would frequently exhort to practise the humility and patience of Christ.

In 1006, St. Alphege was chosen to be Archbishop of Canterbury. His humility and charity soon endeared him to the English Church. "He wept," says his historian, "for the sins of all, and for the salvation of all he daily offered the life-giving sacrifice of the altar." The fervour of his devotion, and his great love for the honour of God's house excited the piety and reverence of all who saw him.

In 1010, the Danes invaded England, and meeting with little opposition from the unwarlike King Ethelred, they laid waste all the central counties, and in the end of the year laid siege to Canterbury, which after twenty days fell into their hands. The fury of the conquerors, though Alphege had not often to implore their mercy, broke forth without restraint; men, women, and children, were cruelly tortured, and massacred in the streets. The Archbishop

could bear the sight no longer, and rushed from the enclosure of Christ Church, where the Monks had taken refuge, pleading with the savage soldiers for his people's lives. They turned at once upon him, and, after torturing him cruelly, thrust him into prison. Of the inhabitants of Canterbury, whether Laymen or Priests, but one in ten was suffered to live.

The Danes had not long been masters of Canterbury, before a pestilence attacked their army, and they began to repent of their cruelty, and begged the Archbishop to help them. By his prayers the pestilence was removed. Yet so covetous were they, that they refused to set him free till he should pay, as his ransom, sixty talents, or about three thousand pounds of silver. He refused to raise so large a sum from the lands of the church, which are the property of the poor, and cited the example of the holy deacon, St. Lawrence, who chose to die rather than commit a similar sacrilege. And he boldly warned his enemies of the anger of Almighty God, which would surely overtake them if they continued obstinate in their cruelty. They were so much enraged, that they fell upon him on the spot, and stoned him to death, and one of them whom, as it is related, he had not long before confirmed, finished his life by a stroke of his battle-axe. As his soul was departing, he cried, "Jesu, receive

me in peace, and forgive them." His martyrdom took place at Greenwich, whither the Danes had carried him as a prisoner, on the 17th of April, within the Octave of Easter.

King Canute was afterwards prevailed on by his Queen, Emma, to make amends for the cruelty and sacrilege which his father had committed, by removing the body of St. Alphege to Canterbury, and laying it in a noble tomb in the Cathedral, which was also enriched by many costly gifts from the King and Queen. Lanfranc, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was in doubt whether St. Alphege could be considered a Martyr, as he died in defence of no part of the Christian faith ; but St. Anselm, whom he consulted, replied that he was indeed a Martyr, for he had given up his life for the sake of justice, and that his sanctity had also been attested by miracles.

Our Lord the path of suffering trod,
And since His sacred blood hath flow'd,
'Tis meet that man should yield to God
The life he owed.

No shame to own the crucified,
Nay 'tis our immortality
That we confess our God who died,
And for Him die.

Fill'd with this thought, with patient smile
Threatening and death he doth withstand,
Fights, Lord, Thy cause, and leans the while
Upon Thy hand.

Seeing above the golden crown,
Into death's arms he willing goes ;
Dying he conquers death ; o'erthrown,
O'erthrows his foes.

Hymn from Parisian Breviary, p. 281.

APRIL 23rd.—303.

St. George, Martyr.

THE true history of St. George is so much obscured by false legends, that it is impossible to know anything certainly regarding him. The Council of Rome, assembled by Gelasius, in 494, condemned the history of his "acts," as apocryphal, and even in some part as forged by heretics to throw discredit upon his name, but included him among the other martyrs of Christ. His name occurs in one of the martyrologies of St. Jerome. And in the Sacramentary of St. Gregory a proper preface is appointed for his

feast. "It is very worthy, just, becoming, and salutary that we should always, and everywhere, give thanks to Thee O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, through Christ our Lord, for the venerable confession of whose name the blessed martyr George endured divers torments, and overcoming them, was found worthy of the crown of immortality, through whom the angels laud Thy Majesty, the dominions adore, the powers tremble, heaven, and the heavenly virtues, and the blessed Seraphim in united exultation celebrate ; with whom we beseech Thee let our voices be admitted in humble Confession, saying," &c. The venerable Bede says, that, on the 23rd of April, St. George truly finished his martyrdom, by decapitation, although the gestic (or acts) of his martyrdom are numbered among the apocryphal writings. "This does not hinder the Church of God," says Tillemont, quoting from an earlier writer, "from honouring this Saint among the Martyrs, and from having a peculiar veneration for him, as one of the most illustrious." The Greek Church honours him with the titles of the Great Martyr and of the Trophy Bearer.

St. George is supposed to have suffered at Nicomedia, in Asia Minor, in Diocletian's persecution. He was by profession a soldier, and confessing Christ, was taken before Datianus, the

governor, by whose orders he was beheaded on the 23rd of April, 303.

In the first Crusade, under Godfrey de Bouillon, and also in the third under our own King Richard, St. George was believed to have appeared in aid of the armies of the Cross.

His encounter with a dragon, in which he is usually represented, is wholly symbolical of the triumph of the Christian hero, of whom St. George is taken for a type, over the powers of evil, which St. John beheld under the image of a dragon.

As the impersonation of Christian chivalry, St. George is the chosen patron of many Orders of Knighthood, the most illustrious of which is the most noble Order of the Knights of St. George of England, commonly called of the Garter. It was instituted by King Edward III., soon after the battle of Cressy, in 1346, and consists of twenty-six Knights Companions, including the Sovereign of England, who is always the Superior, thirteen Canons or Priests of the Chapel of St. George in Windsor, and twenty-six poor Knights, who are veteran soldiers in straitened circumstances. Besides these, an unlimited number of foreign Princes has in later years been added. None are to be admitted as Companions, who are not of honourable descent, Knights, and free from dishonourable stain. The Order is said

in its statutes to have been instituted for the honour of God, and the exaltation of the Catholic faith, joined with piety and charity in establishing a college of religious men to pray for the prosperity of the Sovereign of the Order, and the Knights Companions, and to perform other holy duties, as also for ordering sustentation for a company of Alms Knights, who have not otherwise wherewith to live. The Bishop of Winchester is the Prelate, the Bishop of Oxford the Chancellor of the Order.

And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living ever, Him adored.
Upon his shield the same was also scored,
For soveraine hope, which in His helpe he had;
Right, faithful, true he was in deede and word,
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad,
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

Faerie Queen. B. I., c. l. 2.

MAY 3rd.—326.

Invention of the Holy Cross.

THE event commemorated on this day, the invention or finding of the Cross of our Lord, is attested by several of the Fathers of the Church, as St. Cyril, St. Ambrose, and St. Chrysostom, though the accompanying circumstances are variously related.

St. Helena, a British lady, widow of the Emperor Constantius Chlorus, and mother of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, was converted to Christianity in 311, soon after her son. Fifteen years afterwards she made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to visit the scenes of our Lord's passion and resurrection. But Jewish and Pagan profaneness had effaced nearly every trace of them.

The holy Sepulchre had been filled up with earth, and paved over, so as to leave no mark where it had been, and over it a temple of Venus had been built. The Jews had buried the Cross

on which the Redeemer died, along with the other instruments of his passion, near the place where he suffered, as was their custom with criminals ; "the demon," says St. Ambrose, "rejoicing to hide from the eyes of men the sword with which he had been pierced."

St. Helena, then, in 326, was seized with an anxious desire to recover the Cross, and to remove the profane buildings which covered the places where our Lord's blessed footsteps had been. But she found the search most difficult, for no one then living had ever heard of its place of concealment. As the best means of finding it, she inquired carefully of the oldest inhabitants, both Christians and learned Jews, as to the probable place of the Sepulchre. Having been directed to the most likely spot, she levelled all the buildings which stood upon it, and ordered the earth and rubbish to be removed, till the old soil should be laid bare. After digging to a great depth, the Sepulchre was discovered, and, on examining farther, three Crosses were found, and the title fixed to one of them, as some of the historians say, though, according to the greater number of writers on the subject, it was lying separate from them ; and the Cross of our Lord, they tell us, was distinguished from the others by the miraculous cure of a sick person, by whom it was touched.

St. Helena, thus rewarded for her reverent care, "adored in this sacred wood," says St. Ambrose, "not the wood itself, which would have been the error of the heathen, but the King of Heaven, who had been fixed to the wood." She sent a portion of it to Constantine, and enclosed the rest in a rich case, which she intrusted to the care of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. She herself carried a large portion to Rome, which she deposited in the Church of the Holy Cross, built by herself.

ON A PICTURE OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

Still dost Thou, day and night, silent abide,
Hanging upon the Tree, and there, in vain,
Pleading Thy bleeding hands and wounded side,
With upturn'd eye of agony, while pain
Rendeth each tender heart-string. Yet remain
Pride in my heart and foolishness, preside
O'er me at morn, with me at eventide
Sinking to rest. Oh ! o'er my spirit reign !
Teach me each day to bear my cross with Thee ;
And when night's curtains close, be ever near.
Be Thou my pilot thro' night's cloudy sea !
Be Thou the silent chariot's charioteer !
And when I sink upon the couch of death,
May I within Thine arms resign my breast !

Thoughts in Past Years, p. 32.

MAY 6.

St. John, ante Portam Latinam.

THIS holiday commemorates an event in the life of the blessed Apostle St. John, mentioned by Eusebius, Tertullian, and St. Jerome. In the second persecution of the Christians under Domitian, in the year 75, St. John was brought from Ephesus to Rome, and thrown into a caldron of boiling oil. But, as it has been remarked that those faithful ones who stood by to witness the sacrifice of the Son of God were themselves exempted from martyrdom, the Saint came out unharmed, and was banished to the Isle of Patmos, in the Egean sea, where he was probably condemned to work in the mines. There did he behold the visions recorded in the Book of Revelations. His miraculous deliverance took place near the Latin gate of Rome, leading towards Latium.

“Do we ask,” says St. Jerome, “how James and John, the sons of Zebedee, drank of the cup

of martyrdom, when Scripture relates that the Apostle James alone was beheaded by Herod, but that John finished his life by a natural death ? But if we read in the ecclesiastical history that John for his martyrdom was cast into a caldron of boiling oil, and was banished into the island of Patmos, we shall see that in will he was a Martyr, and that he indeed drank the Cup of Confession ; as did also the three children in the furnace of fire, although the persecutor did not shed their blood.

A Church was built by the Christians near the Latin gate in commemoration of this miracle.

Two brothers freely cast their lot,
With David's royal Son ;
The cost of conquest counting not,
They deem the battle won.

Brothers in heart, they hope to gain
An undivided joy,
That man may one with man remain,
As boy was one with boy.

Christ heard, and will'd that James should fall
First prey of Satan's rage ;
John linger out his fellows all,
And die in bloodless age.

Now they join hands once more above,
Before the Conqueror's Throne ;
Thus God grants prayer : but in His love
Makes times and ways His own.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 32.

MAY 19.—988.

St. Dunstan, Archbishop.

ST. DUNSTAN was born of a noble family in the West of England, not far from Glastonbury, in 925. His parents, who were both holy persons, called his name Dunstan, which signifies the strength of a rock. He was educated at the Monastery of Fleury, near Rouen, in France, and came back to England with a great love and zeal for the monastic life. At his return King Edmund appointed him one of his chaplains, and gave him the ruined Abbey of Glastonbury to restore, though he was not then more than twenty-one years of age, and to assemble a society of Monks under the rule of discipline he had learned abroad. The sudden and violent death of Edmund immediately afterwards, prevented Dunstan from at once proceeding with this work, which was not accomplished till 954, in the reign of King Edred. Among the first who joined his society were Ethelwold, afterwards

Bishop of Winchester; and Oswald, afterwards Archbishop of York.

While these three friends were planning great schemes of Church reform, and endeavouring to advance the monastic life, which they regarded as the most effectual means to that end, King Edred died; and the two sons of Edmund, Edgar and Edwy, divided the kingdom, Edgar succeeding to Mercia and Northumberland, and Edwy to Kent and Wessex. Edwy, who was not then more than fourteen, seems to have been a weak and sensual Prince, and disliked St. Dunstan for interfering with his indulgences. He banished him the year after his accession to the throne, and took back the lands which Edmund and Edred had given to Glastonbury and other monasteries.

In the third year of his reign, Edwy was married to Elgiva, his cousin, a marriage which was unlawful, as being against the rule of the Church at that time. Odo, the Archbishop of Canterbury, therefore, compelled them to separate, and soon afterwards the people, who disliked King Edwy, rose in rebellion against him, and Elgiva is said to have been killed in a tumult at Gloucester. The King himself died at an early age, 959.

On his death, his brother Edgar became sole King. Two years afterwards, Odo, who was

called by his contemporaries "the good," died, and was succeeded by St. Dunstan, who had before been recalled from banishment. During his episcopate of twenty years, he had full time to carry out his designs ; about forty monasteries were built or restored, and most of them richly endowed. Their rule was that of St. Benedict, since prevalent in the Church, and differing in several respects from the rule of earlier monasteries. St. Dunstan was engaged in continual strife with the secular clergy, as those Priests were called who were not Monks. It would seem that they had fallen into an easy, self-indulgent way of life, and St. Dunstan wished to bring them to greater strictness. In many instances they were removed, as it seems, hastily, to make room for the Monks, and so there arose a jealousy between them, which never slept till the monasteries were in their turn suppressed, in the time of Henry VIII., the same kind of charges being then made against the Monks, or regular clergy, as they were called, as had been brought in St. Dunstan's time against the seculars.

St. Dunstan was a skilful artist, a musician, a painter, an organ-builder, and, according to some accounts, a bell-founder. There can be little doubt that he was also an ingenious architect.

The Church laws passed in King Edgar's reign are still remaining to us, and are most likely the

work of St. Dunstan ; many of them are still acknowledged by the English Church—as that every clergyman is to do his duty in his own parish ; not to interfere with that of another ; that he must not appear in the Church, or at least not do any ministerial act there, without his surplice ; that he must not administer the Holy Communion in a private house, except in case of sickness ; that every Parish Priest must preach every Sunday to his people. Parents are directed to bring their children to baptism within six weeks from their birth ; to teach them as soon as they can learn, the Apostles' Creed, and Lord's Prayer ; and not to keep them too long unconfirmed by the Bishop. In regard to the education of the young, every Priest who keeps a school, is to understand some handicraft himself, and teach it to his pupils, that it may hereafter be profitable to the Church. As acts of penance, or fruits worthy of repentance, he bids rich men to build and endow Churches, to repair public ways, to build bridges over deep waters, or arches over miry ways, to give alms thankfully of their goods to needy persons, widows, orphans, and strangers, to set free their own slaves, or redeem those of other men. But this was not to stand in the way of fasting and self discipline. “For it is the right way,” he says, “for every man to wreak his own misdeeds upon himself.”

St. Dunstan was very strict and fearless in enforcing discipline. It is said that a man who had contracted an unlawful marriage, finding that nothing would induce the Archbishop to admit him to Communion, unless he would put her away whom he had so married, obtained from a bad man, who was then Pope, a letter, entreating and commending St. Dunstan to dispense with his faults, and grant him absolution. "God forbid," said he, "that I should do it. If he shows me that he repents of his crime, I will obey the Pope's instructions, but while he is in his guilt, I will rather forfeit my life than suffer him to triumph over the discipline of the Church."

St. Dunstan had now seen seven Kings on the throne of England. St. Edward, the Martyr, had succeeded his father, Edgar, and after his murder, Ethelred, his half-brother, had ascended the throne. As the Archbishop grew older and less fit for public duties, he applied himself the more diligently to prayer, contemplation, and self-discipline. On Ascension Day, 988, when he had finished the sacred mysteries, and given the blessing to the people, he told them that his departure was at hand, and besought them to be mindful of him in their prayers. While he spoke his face was seen to shine with an unearthly light. On the second day after, he foretold the calamities which soon afterwards overwhelmed Eng-

land in the Danish invasion, and then asked for the Blessed Sacrament, and, after receiving it, he commended his soul to God's mercy, and departed to be with Him whom he had ever desired.

Sent as the Father sent the Son,
'Tis not for you to swerve nor shun
Or power or peril; ye must go before,
If caught in the fierce bloody shower,
Think on your Lord's o'erwhelming hour;
Are ye not Priests to Him who the world's forfeit bore?

Throned in His Church till He return,
Why should ye fear to judge and spurn
This evil world, chained at His feet and yours?
Why, with dejected faltering air,
Your rod of more than empire bear?
Your brows are royal yet; God's unction aye endures.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 206.



MAY 26TH.—604.

St. Augustin, Archbishop.

NOTHING is known of the early life of St. Augustin, till he became Abbot of the Monastery of St. Andrew in Rome, which had been founded by St. Gregory the Great. His sanctity so recommended him to this holy Bishop, that he admitted him, along with a few others, to his most intimate friendship. We have already seen, in the life of St. Gregory, how ardently he desired the conversion of England, and how he would have undertaken the mission alone, if the people of Rome had not urged their Bishop to recall him. After his promotion to the Chair of St. Peter, he accomplished what he had so long desired, and in July, 596, the Abbot Augustin, and a little band of Monks, were sent from Rome, to carry the Gospel into Britain. St. Gregory gave them letters of recommendation

to the Bishops of France, near whose churches they were to pass ; to the two sons of Childebert, Kings of Burgundy and Lorraine ; and to their grandmother, Brunchant. On reaching Aix, the courage of the missionaries failed them, at the prospect of so long a journey, through strange and barbarous nations, to a country whose manners, and even whose language, were unknown to them ; and they sent St. Augustin to Rome, to entreat St. Gregory to let them return. But he saw in their discouragement a fresh reason for hope, as if the devil, foreseeing the success of this invasion of his dominions, had raised an obstacle to deter them. He wrote to them, therefore, urging them to go on with the great work they had undertaken. "Go forward in God's name," he said, "knowing the glory of the everlasting reward which shall follow this great labour. Almighty God protect you by His grace, and grant me to see the fruit of your labour in His eternal kingdom." He recommended them to take with them Priests from France, to act as interpreters on their arrival in England. For the languages of the Anglo-Saxons and of the Franks were very similar, both nations being of German origin.

The missionaries then set forward with fresh ardour upon their journey, and landed safely, in

597, on the island of Thanet, on the coast of Kent, in number about forty.

There is very good reason to believe that Christianity was first preached in Britain in apostolic times. As early as the third century there were glorious martyrs in our land. The Saxons on their arrival found the religion of the Cross everywhere prevailing ; but having the power in their own hands, they set up their own heathenism, demolished the Christian Churches, and suppressed the true worship. The Church lost ground almost everywhere, was driven into a corner, and was nowhere visible except in those places where the Britons had still some footing, insomuch that at last heathenism was the prevailing religion.

When St. Augustin landed, Ethelbert was King of Kent. His Queen, Bertha, daughter of one of the Kings of France, was a Christian, and had leave from the King to enjoy the free exercise of her religion ; Lindhard, Bishop of Senlis, came with her into England as her spiritual director.

As soon as they landed, the missionaries sent interpreters to tell the King that they were sent from Rome to bring him good news, the certain promise of eternal joy, and of a kingdom which should never end, with the living and true God. He invited them to stay in the island till he

should determine what ought to be done for them, and in the meantime provided them with every necessary. He soon after went to the island, to give them an audience, but would only consent to meet them in the open air, having a superstitious fear of magical charms. They arrived at the appointed place in solemn procession, bearing a silver cross, and a banner, on which was represented the figure of our Saviour, and chanting Litanies as they walked along. The King bade them be seated, and they began to preach the Gospel to him. When they had finished, he said that those were good words and promises; but as they were to him new and uncertain, he could not at once embrace what was so contrary to the customs of his nation. But in return for their having come so far to do him a kindness, as they said, he promised to provide them with whatever they should need, and allowed them to gain as many of the people as they could. He also gave them a house at Durovernum, the capital of his kingdom, now called Canterbury. They entered in procession, with the cross and banner, singing: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, according to all Thy mercy, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy place, for we have sinned. Alleluia."

They lived as they taught, and took nothing from their disciples but the bare necessities of life, applying themselves unceasingly, in the intervals of preaching, to prayer, watching, and fasting. A little way to the eastward of the city stood a church which had been built in the time of the Romans, and dedicated to St. Martin. This was now set apart for their use; the people began to resort to them. "Some," says St. Bede, "believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity and innocence of their lives, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine." Among others, the King was struck by the pure life of these holy men, and, encouraged by their promises, the truth of which they confirmed by many signs and miracles, he believed and was baptized. Many then flocked daily to hear the word, and, leaving the heathen rites, were admitted into the unity of the holy Church of Christ. The King did not force any one to embrace the faith which the missionaries taught; he only showed greater love towards the Christians, as being associated with him in the Celestial Kingdom. He also gave a site for a Cathedral Church, which he liberally endowed.

St. Augustin then went to France, to be consecrated a Bishop by Virgilius, Archbishop of Arles, who was then Primate of the Gallican

Church. He immediately returned to England, and on Christmas-day baptized ten thousand persons.

He then sent to tell St. Gregory the news of his success, and received letters in return, expressing the strongest sympathy in all his labours, and joy for the conversion of the English; but reminding him that the miracles wrought by his hand ought to be a source of solemn fear, calling to his remembrance the saying of the Lord to His disciples: "Rejoice not that the devils are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." He also suggested to him directions for preserving humility in the midst of his success, such as the remembrance of former sin and frailty.

St. Augustin having thus prosperously begun his mission, consecrated the Cathedral Church of Canterbury, and dedicated it to our Lord. He also built another Church and Monastery, which he did not live to consecrate, called after him the Abbey of St. Augustin. Its ruins have been partially restored, as a missionary college for the English Church.

St. Augustin, as head of the newly-converted Saxon Church, invited the remnant of the British Bishops to an interview, proposing to them to assist him in preaching the Gospel to their

heathen neighbours. The Roman and British Clergy differed upon some minor points, and neither of them thought it right to give way ; so that this meeting produced no good effect.

Having lived to see the Christian faith firmly rooted in Saxon England, St. Augustin entered upon his reward about two months after the death of St. Gregory.

The following sentence was written upon his tomb : " Here rests the Lord Augustin, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who was formerly sent by the blessed Gregory, Pontiff of the City of Rome, and being assisted by God with miraculous power, brought the King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ ; and having finished the days of his office in peace, he departed on the seventh of the kalends of June, in the reign of the same king."

For ever hallowed be this morning fair,
Blest be the unconscious shore on which ye tread,
And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead
Of martial banner, in procession bear ;
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,
The pictured Saviour. By Augustin led,
They come—and onward travel without dread,
Chaunting in barbarous ears a tuneful prayer—
Sung for themselves, and those whom they would free.
Rich conquest waits them ; the tempestuous sea,

Of ignorance, that ran so rough and high,
And heeded not the voice of clashing swords,
These good men humble by a few bare words,
And calm with fear of God's Divinity.

Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Sonnets,

Part I. xiv.



MAY 27TH.—735.

Venerable Bede, Priest.

THE venerable Bede was born near the village of Jarrow, in Northumberland, about the year 673. When very young, Bede was removed from a Monastery at Wearmouth, where he had been placed at seven years old, to the Monastery at Jarrow, and there he spent his time, as he himself tells us, in meditating on Holy Scripture ; in the observance of his rule, in chanting the daily office in the Church, in learning, teaching, and writing. He became master of the Latin and Greek languages, and of every science then known. At nineteen he was ordained Deacon, and at thirty, Priest. After his ordination he devoted himself more exclusively to the study of Holy Scripture, and wrote Commentaries on a great part of it. He wrote the lives of many holy men of his time, and also compiled a Martyrology, containing short notices

of the lives of the Saints, honoured by the Church in his age.

His great work is the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, from the landing of Julius Cæsar till the year 731.

Numbers of disciples were drawn by his name to Jarrow, and many of them became eminent for learning and holiness. He seems to have rarely left his enclosure, but employed the intervals of study in manual labour, as his rule enjoined.

In his last sickness he wrote a letter to Egbert, Archbishop of York, who had asked his advice as to the best way of governing his diocese. He urged him to be careful that every one should know the Lord's Prayer and the Creed by heart, and that those who were ignorant of Latin should be taught to repeat them in their own language. For this purpose, he said, he translated them. He complained of the relaxation of discipline, and of the irregularities which had crept into the monastic life in England, and of the infrequent reception of the Holy Communion.

The circumstances of St. Bede's happy departure are related by his disciple, Cuthbert. Fifteen days before Easter Day, which in that year, 735, fell on the 17th of April, he was seized with great oppression in breathing. It

lasted till Ascension Day, but without pain. The days of the Paschal joy he spent in unceasing praise, which burst forth even during the night in holy hymns and anthems. He was still able to devote part of his time to his disciples, and exhorted them to meditate on their last end, to rouse them from spiritual sloth. He would give God thanks for his sickness, and would sometimes quote the words of St. Ambrose, "I have not so lived among you as to be ashamed to live, nor do I fear to die, for we have a merciful Lord."

He was then engaged in translating the Gospel of St. John into Anglo-Saxon. He lived to finish only the first five chapters.

On the Tuesday before Ascension Day, Venerable Bede became worse, yet he continued to teach his disciples, and urged them to diligence as the time of his departure drew near. He passed the whole of that night in prayer and praise. Very early next morning he resumed his instructions till the hour of terce, or nine o'clock, when the Litanies of Rogation were sung by the whole convent in solemn procession. One of the brethren stayed with him to write what he should dictate. About the hour of nones, or three o'clock, he said to Cuthbert, "I have a few trifles in a box, run and fetch them, and call the brethren, that I may distribute these

among them." When they were come, he gave each of them a little memorial of his love, and besought them all to be mindful of his soul in their prayers, and especially in the Eucharistic sacrifice. The brethren wept abundantly, but he comforted them, and said, "The time of my freedom is at hand, I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ, for my soul desires to see Christ my King in His glory." At the Vespers of that day, as they were singing the antiphon, "O King of glory, Lord of virtues, who didst ascend this day in triumph above all heavens, leave us not orphans, but send the promise of the Father upon us, the Spirit of truth, alleluia." When he came to the words "Leave us not orphans," he wept much, and after the office was finished, he repeated it again, and often during the rest of the day, with many tears. "And we wept along with him," says Cuthbert, "reading and weeping by turns."

In the evening a young disciple, to whom he was dictating, said to him, "Dearest master, one sentence remains." "Write quickly." He replied, "It is done." "You have well said, it is consummated. Now take my head into your hands, for I love to sit opposite my little oratory, where I used to pray and call upon my Father." He was laid upon the floor of his cell, upon a cloth of hair, and received the last anointing of

the Church, and the blessed Body of our Lord Jesus, in the presence of the whole community. He then gave each of them the kiss of peace, and as he was singing the Doxology, his spirit passed to God early in the morning of Ascension Day.

These in life's distant even,
Shall shine serenely bright,
As in the autumnal heaven,
Mild rainbow tints at night;
When the last shower is stealing down,
And ere they sink to rest,
The sun-beams weave a parting crown,
For some sweet woodland nest.

The promise of the morrow
Is glorious on that eve,
Dear as the holy sorrow,
When good men cease to live.
When brightening ere it die away,
Mounts up their altar flame,
Still tending with intenser ray
To heaven, from whence it came.

Say not it dies, that glory,
'Tis caught unquench'd on high;
Those saint-like brows so hoary,
Shall wear it in the sky.
No smile is like the smile of death,
When all good musings past,
Rise wafted with the parting breath,
The sweetest, though the last.

Christian Year, p. 289.

JUNE 1st.—90.

St. Nicomede, Priest and Martyr.

ST. NICOMEDE, a holy Priest of the Roman Church in the end of the first century, is supposed to have been a disciple of St. Peter, and to have assisted him in preaching the Gospel. Under the reign of Domitian, Felicula, a virgin, had suffered death for Christ, and Nicomede, at the peril of his life, buried her with Christian rites. Flaccus, a nobleman, who had been the cause of Felicula's martyrdom, ordered him to be led to an altar, and bade him sacrifice to the gods. He refused to deny Christ, and was beaten to death with whips loaded with lead. His body was thrown into the Tiber, but was recovered, and buried in hallowed earth by another Christian Priest.

The sixth had charge of them now being dead,
In seemely sort their corses to engrave,
And deck with dainty flowers their brydall bed,
That to their heavenly Spouse both sweet and brave
They might appeare, when He their soules shall save.
The wondrous workmanship of God's owne mould,
Whose face He made all beastes to feare, and gave
All in his hand, even dead we honour should,
Ah, dearest God, me graunt I dead be not defould!

Faerie Queene, B. i. c. x. 42.



JUNE 5TH.—755.

St. Boniface, Archbishop and Martyr.

ST. BONIFACE, the Apostle of Germany, as he is called, was born at Crediton, in Devonshire, in 680. His English name was Winfrid. He was brought up in the Monastery of Exeter, and

applied himself diligently to learning, especially to the interpretation of Holy Scripture. When about thirty years of age he was ordained Priest, and began to labour earnestly for the salvation of souls.

From his youth, however, his most ardent desire had been to carry the Gospel into Pagan countries. He made an ineffectual attempt for the conversion of Friesland in 716, and two years afterwards went to Rome, and offered himself for the work of a missionary to Pope Gregory II. The Pope approved of his design, and gave him his blessing, and a commission to preach and baptize in any infidel countries whither he might choose to go.

St. Boniface, passing through Lombardy, began his labours in Bavaria and Thuringia, countries which, though not wholly Pagan, had almost entirely fallen from the faith, owing to the carelessness and immorality of the Clergy, and the influence of false traitors who had usurped their place. Hearing that there was now a prospect of success in Friesland, Boniface hastened thither, and joined St. Willebrord, Archbishop of Utrecht, who had already made many converts there. They laboured together in Friesland, overturning the idol temples, and building churches in their place.

St. Willebrord wished to consecrate his com-

panion as his coadjutor and successor, but his great humility made him shrink from the honour. He asked leave to go into the eastern part of Germany to carry the Gospel still farther among its rude people. St. Willebrord consented, and gave him his benediction. He went into Hesse and Saxony, and converted many thousands.

As Boniface and his companions travelled through Thuringia, they found the country so poor and so wasted by war, that they were often obliged to labour with their hands for their support. They had also frequently to conceal themselves from the Pagans. Still they persevered, gaining new converts as they went on. In 723, Boniface went to Rome to ask farther advice and instruction from the Pope. Gregory examined him upon his faith, and, on the feast of St. Andrew, consecrated him a Bishop. On his return he confirmed many of those whom he had already baptized, and cut down a great tree, long superstitiously venerated as the Oak of Woden. With the wood of it he built a Christian oratory. Many servants of Christ, both priests and nuns went from England to assist him in his missionary labours, and in establishing Convents.

Boniface lived to see the church firmly established in Germany under many Bishops, over

whom he was appointed Primate, and Legate of the See of Rome; but one thing was wanting to his reward, a Martyr's death. He resumed his missionary labours, and as he was departing from Mentz, he said to Lullus, whom he had consecrated Bishop of that See: "The time of my death approaches, I pray you to finish the churches I have begun in Thuringia, and to labour for the conversion of the people."

He went down the Rhine to Friesland, with the Bishop of Utrecht, and twelve Priests, Deacons, and Monks. They converted many, and built churches on the ruins of the idol temples. On the day appointed for confirming the newly baptized, a troop of savage Pagans rushed upon them sword in hand. The Christians at first tried resistance, but Boniface heard the tumult, and knew that he should now die for Christ, which had been the ardent desire of his life. He came forth to them and cried, "Cease to fight, my children, the Scripture forbids us to render evil for evil. The day has come that I have long expected, hope in God and He will save your souls." The Pagans immediately overpowered them, and put fifty-two of them to death. Thus did the blessed Archbishop receive his crown on the fifth of June, 755. His body rests in his church of Fulda, where he had

commanded that it should be buried, and many miracles are recorded to have been wrought at his tomb.

He whom the Father sent to die.
Hath given you His commission high,
The channels of His grace to be,
And vessels of His charity.

The lamb, which by the wolves was slain,
Sends you as lambs to wolves again,
They have aside their nature laid,
And lambs by you of wolves are made.

The earth look'd to the offended skies,
Teeming with impious sacrifice ;
Now by your sweat 'tis newly dyed,
And by your blood is purified.

New fruits her genial face renew,
Blest by that fertilizing dew ;
How rich the harvest of His grace,
And we in that have found a place.

If Thou who dost the increase give,
Wilt look on us, then we shall live,
Ripen, and grow, and evermore
Be gather'd to Thy heavenly store.

Glory to God, both Three and One,
The Father, Spirit, and the Son,
Who calleth us from dead of night
To see His countenance of light.

Hymns from Parisian Breviary, p. 275.



JUNE 17TH.—303.

St. Alban, Martyr.

ST. ALBAN, the Protomartyr of Britain, suffered in the persecution under Diocletian. He was a native of Verulanium, now called after him St. Alban's, of noble family, and educated at Rome. When the storm of persecution first reached Britain, he was still a Pagan, and zealous for the old idolatry. A Christian Priest, flying from his persecutors, sought shelter under his roof. Alban received and entertained him hospitably, and was so much struck by the holiness of his guest, who passed all his time in prayer and watching, that he desired to be instructed in the Christian faith. As the Priest unfolded the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, Alban's heart was touched by divine grace, and with many tears he renounced his false faith, and was admitted by baptism into the fold of Christ. The Priest stayed with him a few days longer,

to give him some farther instruction, and then did he who had received more than a prophet, receive more than a prophet's reward, even a Martyr's crown.

A party of soldiers came to search for the Priest. Alban sent him away covered with his own cloak, and went out to meet the soldiers, wearing the Priest's habit. He was seized and dragged before the judge, who commanded him to sacrifice. St. Bede gives the following account of his martyrdom: "Because," said the judge, "you have concealed a rebel and a sacrilegious person, rather than give him up to the soldiers to suffer the punishment of his impiety as a blasphemer of the gods, you must undergo the tortures due to him, if you dare to depart from the worship of our religion." But St. Alban, who had freely confessed that he was a Christian, did not in the least fear the threats of the judge, but girded with the armour of a spiritual soldier, declared openly that he would not obey his orders. "Know," said he, "that I am a Christian, and that I will join only in the Christian worship." Then the judge was full of fury, and cried out: "If you would enjoy eternal life, delay not to sacrifice to the great gods." But Alban answered, "Those sacrifices which you offer to demons can neither help those who offer them, nor can they grant the desires and

prayers of their supplicants. Nay, more than this, whosoever sacrifices to those idols, shall receive the eternal punishment of hell for his reward." When the judge heard this his fury was without bounds, and he ordered the holy Confessor of God to be scourged by his torturers, thinking to bend the constancy of his heart by stripes, since he could not by words. But when his sufferings were most severe, the Martyr bore them patiently, yea joyfully, for the sake of his Lord. And when the judge saw that he could not be overcome by torture, and would not renounce the Christian worship, he commanded that he should be beheaded. As he was led to death, he came to a river whose rapid current separated the city walls from the opposite bank where he was to suffer. He saw a vast multitude of men and women who had come together, no doubt by a divine instinct, to encourage the blessed Confessor and Martyr, and they so crowded the bridge over the river, that the whole company could hardly have passed before the evening. Nearly all the inhabitants had come out to see. St. Alban, then, whose soul burned with desire to arrive quickly at his martyrdom, and yet was delayed by the torrent, raised his eyes to heaven, and presently he beheld the stream fall back, and open him a way to pass. And when the executioner, among

others, saw this, he hastened to meet him as he came towards the place where he was to die, and, moved by divine grace, he threw away his sword, which he had held drawn in his hand, and he prayed to be allowed to suffer, either with the Martyr whom he had been ordered to put to death, or in his stead. While thus, from being a persecutor, he became a companion of the true faith, and while there was some delay among the executioners owing to the sword having been thrown away, the venerable Confessor of God ascended the hill with a great crowd of people.

It was a fitting spot of rare beauty, about fifty paces from the river's bank, adorned, or rather clothed, with many kind of flowers. There was no sudden steepness, no ruggedness, but the natural slope was smooth and gentle on every side ; as if God had made it so beautiful, that it might be worthy to be consecrated by the blood of a blessed Martyr. While he stood on the top of the mount, St. Alban prayed to God to give him a little water, and immediately a fountain sprang up at his feet, which has flowed ever since, that all might know that the river also had done honour to the Martyr. That river returned to its natural channel when its service was no longer needed.

The glorious Martyr was then beheaded, and

immediately received the crown of life which God has promised to them that love Him. The soldier also who had been convicted by divine mercy, and had refused to strike the holy Confessor of God, was beheaded along with him. Of whom it is certain, that though he had not been regenerated in the font of baptism, yet, being purified in the laver of his blood, he became worthy of entering the heavenly kingdom. Then the judge gave orders that the persecution should cease, for he was astonished by the novelty of such heavenly miracles. For he began to see that the saints counted death an honour, instead of being forced by it to give up their devotion to the faith of Christ. The stately Abbey of St. Alban was afterwards built upon the spot of his martyrdom. The Priest who baptized him escaped into Wales, and, after converting many to the faith, laid down his life also for the testimony of Jesus in the same persecution.

To us the places where your ashes lie
Shall be as altars, whence shall steadier rise
Our prayer to heaven ; and that blest sacrifice,
Where God the victim cometh down from high,
Shall consecrate to holier mystery ;
He here accepts your deaths as joined with His,
Here builds all in one body, and supplies
Our dying frames with immortality.

And hence your graves become a tower of aid,
A refuge from bad thoughts, a sacred shade ;
Until, fresh clad with new and wondrous dowers,
Our flesh shall join the angelic choirs, and be
A living temple crowned with heavenly towers ;
Where evermore the praises shall ascend
Of the great undivided One and Three,
And God be all in all, world without end.

Hymn from Parisian Breviary, p. 267.

JUNE 20TH.—980.

**Translation of St. Edward,
King and Martyr.**

Yet for their bones meek Piety shall plead,
Blest Piety, which honoureth the dead !
Though scattered far and wide, yet God's own Eye
Doth keep them that they perish not ; and when
The promised hour shall come, their God again
Shall gather them, and as He builds on high
His habitation, each there, moulded by His grace,
Shall live and find a sure abiding place.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 266.

JULY 2ND.

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ye mountains, bend ye low,
O'er which the Virgin flies,
To whom the starry skies
Would their glad summits bow.

In maiden fear concealed,
Long hid in quiet home,
She now abroad doth come,
With charity her shield.

She flies without delay,—
She flies from human eyes,—
Not to be seen, she flies,
And fears lest aught betray.

Blest earth whereon she stood,
Put forth your fragrance sweet ;—
Blest hills, that felt her feet,
The Mother with her God.

More blest ye friends, whose guest
She now doth silence break,
Of heavenly things to speak,
And where her footsteps rest.

The Father who doth send
The Son, who saves the lost,
The guiding Holy Ghost,
We praise Thee without end.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 218.



JULY 4TH.—473.

**Translation of St. Martin,
Bishop and Confessor.**

“The fathers are in dust, yet live to God :”
So says the truth ; as if the motionless clay
Still held the seeds of life beneath the sod,
Smouldering and struggling till the judgment-day.

And hence we learn with reverence to esteem
Of these frail houses, though the grave confines ;
Sophist may urge his cunning texts, and deem
That they are earth ;—but they are heavenly shrines.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 38.



JULY 15TH.—971.

Translation of St. Swithun, Bishop.

ST. SWITHUN was born early in the ninth century, in the kingdom of the West Saxons, and brought up from a child in the Monastery of Winchester. He was spiritual director to King Egbert, who entrusted his son Ethelwolf to his care. When Ethelwolf, who was afterwards the father of the great King Alfred, ascended the throne, he made St. Swithun Bishop of Winchester.

The holy Bishop devoted himself wholly to the care of the flock committed to his charge. He gave himself very little time for sleep, that he might have the more for prayer. He was ever exhorting the faithful to perseverance, and the fallen to penitence ; and a great part of his time was given to the care of the poor. His greatest endeavour was after the grace of humility ; and, as a means to its attainment, he practised many humiliations, such as travelling barefoot, like a poor man, when he was visiting his diocese, and doing this by night lest he should be seen of men,

and so be praised for his humility. An historian of his own time says of him, that "he followed the path of peace and holiness, thirsting after the fountain of life and eternal bliss. It was at St. Swithun's suggestion that King Ethelwolf bestowed on the Church the tithe or tenth part of all the lands of his kingdom.

This Saint was taken to his reward on the 2nd of July, in the year 862. As he lay dying, he enjoined his Monks not to bury him in the Church, but in a humble place, where the feet of passers-by might tread, and the rain of heaven might fall upon him ; but in 971 his remains were translated into the Cathedral Church of Winchester, on the 15th of July, on which day his name is honoured in the English Kalendar.

And must each shrine of simple state,
In purer days devote,
To holy names yet consecrate,
Where holy voices float,
In dust beneath their feet be trod
Who make the people's voice a god ?

Then be it ;—of thy sons the while,
Be but the love more warm,
Not theirs to court the people's smile,
Nor to the age conform.
So for our land their prayers may rise,
And God accept, when men despise.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 168.

JULY 20TH.—END OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

St. Margaret, V. M.

WE know little more of St. Margaret than her name, and that after witnessing a good confession before a Pagan governor, she was honoured to die for her Lord. Her martyrdom took place at Antioch, in Pisidia, probably during the tenth general persecution. It is said that she was the daughter of a heathen priest, and was converted by a Christian nurse. St. Margaret is generally represented as bearing a cross, with which she is subduing a dragon, to signify that by the virtue of the Cross she overcame the temptations of the devil.

Come, Self-devotion, high and pure,
Thoughts that in thankfulness endure,
Though dearest hopes are faithless found,
And dearest hearts are bursting round.

Come, Resignation, spirit meek,
And let me kiss thy placid cheek,

And read in thy pale eye serene
Their blessing, who by faith can wean
Their hearts from sense, and love
God only, and the joys above.

They say who know the life divine,
And upward gaze with eagle eyne,
That by each golden crown on high,
Rich with celestial jewelry,
Which for our Lord's redeem'd is set,
There hangs a radiant coronet,
All gemm'd with pure and living light,
Too dazzling for a sinner's sight,
Prepar'd for virgin souls, and them
Who seek the Martyr's diadem.

Nor deem, who to that bliss aspire,
Must win their way through blood and fire.
The writhings of a wounded heart
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart.
Oft in Life's stillest shade reclining,
In Desolation unrepining,
Without a hope on earth to find
A mirror in our answering mind ;
Meek souls there are, who little dream
Their daily strife an Angel's theme,
Or that the rod they take so calm,
Shall prove in heaven a Martyr's palm.

Christian Year, p. 216.



JULY 22ND.

St. Mary Magdalen.

WE read in the Holy Gospels of "a woman who was a sinner," Luke vii.—of Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus, John ii. 2—xii. 1—Mark xiv. 3—Matthew xxvi. 1—and of Mary Magdalen, who followed Jesus from Galilee and ministered to him. These different accounts are by some believed to refer to three different women; by some the woman who was a sinner is supposed to be the same who was afterwards St. Mary Magdalen, but not the sister of Lazarus; and by others all these events are considered to belong to St. Mary Magdalen's history alone. This opinion has been most common in the Western Church since the time of St. Gregory the Great, who speaks of her as having been a great sinner in her youth, as having been given over in chastisement for her sins, to be possessed by seven devils; as coming to our Lord in deep penitence, in the house of Simon the Pharisee, when her many sins were forgiven her, and the seven

devils cast out ; and as then returning to dwell with her sister and brother at that house in Bethany, which our Lord often vouchsafed to visit, and when she poured the ointment upon his head.

The opinion that these things are told of different women has been always held by the Eastern Church ; but whether they belong to one holy woman or to three, the words of St. Bernard are equally true : "Blessed is she who anointed the feet of Jesus ; more blessed, she who anointed the Lord's head ; but most blessed, she who prepared the precious dew for His whole body."

Nothing more is positively known of St. Mary Magdalen than what we read in the Gospels, but she is commonly believed to have retired to Ephesus, after our Lord's Ascension, with the Blessed Virgin and St. John, and to have survived the Mother of God for some years. The Greeks call her the equal of the Apostles, because she was the first witness of the resurrection. She is said to hold the same rank among the holy women as St. Peter among the Apostles, the mother of our Lord standing in her own unapproachable blessedness alone.

So when rose on Easter dawn,
Our all-glorious Sun,

You might see love's eye withdrawn
From th' adored One.
Tears that morn were in her waking,
Now again her heart is breaking ;—
Who may soothe her soul's sad aching ?
For her Lord is gone.

Him for tears she may not see,
Even her soul's delight,
Yet full near to her is He.
Say, did hosts of light
Ever breathe in mortals' hearing,
Tones so soft, so heavenly cheering ?
" Mary," was the word endearing—
Heaven and earth grew light.

Lyra Innocentium, p. 28.

JULY 26TH.

St. Anne, Mother of B. V. M.

THE Bible tells us nothing of the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but that they were of the tribe of Judah, and that her father was descended from the royal line of David. Yet there has been an early tradition in the Church that their names were Joachim and Anne. St. Joachim's name may be traced as having been known and

honoured in the fourth century. A church was built in honour of St. Anne, by the Emperor Justinian I., at Constantinople, and her remains removed to it in 550.

The history of Joachim and Anne must for ever remain unknown to us, as no record is preserved of it in the first ages, and later accounts are wholly fabulous, but their names may well be had in reverence for her sake, "whom all generations shall call blessed." St. Anne is generally represented with a book in her hand, to show that she took care to teach holy lessons to her blessed child.

And oh! be sure no guardian fires
Flash brighter in their joy
Than theirs, who scan the meek desires,
And lowly love employ.

Of maiden in her quiet bower,
When haply glance or mien
Reminds them of the lily flower,
With blessed Mary seen.

Lyra Innocentium, p. 20.

AUGUST 1st.

Lammas Day.

THE name of this holiday is a corruption of Loaf-mass, a feast of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the corn, which was anciently observed in England in the beginning of August. Bread made of the new wheat was offered at the mass of this day, and solemnly blessed ; and hence in many parts of England tenants were bound to bring in wheat of that year to their lords, on or before the first of August. The day was kept with great festivity.

Not by manna showers at morning
Shall our board be then supplied,
But a strange pale gold, adorning
Many a tufted mountain's side,
Yearly feed us,
Year by year our murmurings chide.

Lyra Innocentium, p. 181.

AUGUST 6TH.

Transfiguration.

THE Transfiguration of our Lord, which has been called by some of the Fathers the sacrament of the resurrection, probably took place on Mount Tabor, in Galilee, and is recorded by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, as also by St. Peter in his Epistle. It followed immediately after our Lord's announcement of his coming agony to his disciples. "After the confirmation of the Cross," says St. Jerome, the "glory of the resurrection is shown, that they might not fear the reproach of the Cross, who had seen with their eyes the glory of the future resurrection." "The Lord," says St. Bede, "went into a mountain to pray, and to be transfigured, to show them who expect the fruit of the resurrection, and who desire to see the King in His beauty, that they must dwell above in mind, and must be occupied in continual prayer." And St. Bernard: "Wherefore did He ascend to be trans-

figured, but to teach us to ascend in thought to the future glory which shall be revealed in us? Ascend with heart elate, and God will exalt you. For here is the mountain in which Christ is transfigured. Ascend, and ye shall know how the Lord hath glorified His holy one. Lighten your hearts, I beseech you, from the weight of earthly thoughts, that ye may see the Lord transfigured."

Many mystical reasons are given by early writers for the appearance of Moses and Elias. As for instance, that in the Gospel, the Law of the Prophets have their fulfilment, or that it signifies the power of the Lord over the quick and dead, for Elias had not yet tasted death. There is a very ancient tradition in the church, that the two witnesses whom St. John saw in the Apocalypse, an Enoch and Elijah, who shall once again appear on earth and preach the Gospel to the Jews, and albeit be put to death by Antichrist.

It has been ever believed in the Church, that our Lord showed himself on the mount of transfiguration, as He will appear in His glorified humanity at His second coming. The words of the ancient Collect for this festival are as follows :

"O God, who didst on this day reveal to the Fathers of either Testament thine only begotten

Son wonderfully transfigured, grant to us, we beseech Thee, to arrive at the eternal contemplation of His glory, with whom Thou hast testified that Thou art ever well pleased through the same."

If ever on the mount with Thee
I seem to soar in vision bright,
With thoughts of coming agony
Stay Thou the too presumptuous flight:
Gently along the vale of tears
Lead me from Tabor's sunbright steep,
Let me not grudge a few short years
With Thee tow'rd heaven to walk and weep.

Christian Year, p. 313.

AUGUST 7TH.

Holy Name of Jesus.

THERE are two ways in which we must do honour to the most holy name of Jesus. First, By paying it lowly outward reverence. "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow," as is enjoined by the eighteenth Canon of the English Church. "Likewise, when in time of divine service the Lord Jesus shall be mentioned,

due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present, as it hath been accustomed; testifying by these outward ceremonies and gestures their inward humility, Christian resolution, and due acknowledgment that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone all the mercies, graces, and promises of God to mankind for this life and the life to come, are wholly comprised."

In many lesser ways did the early Christians show outwardly their adoration of the name of Jesus, placing it or its initial letters upon the sacred vessels and ornaments of the Church, as the three letters I. H. S., which are the three first letters of the Greek name of Jesus.

Second—By doing all things in the name of the Lord Jesus. "Let this be our law of life in this confused and perilous world. The first thing in the morning offer all your intentions and all the works of the day to God. During the day, renew this intention by intervals of prayer, or by momentary aspirations. Before you begin any new work, ask, 'Am I doing this for His name? Can I do this in His sight? Will He accept this as done for His sake? Can I ask His blessing upon it? Can I offer it up to Him?' If you are met by difficulties, renew the consciousness for whom you are at work.

If tempted to impatience or to anger, or to resentment, say this holy name in heart to yourself. If you suffer, call to mind, 'This I suffer for Him who suffered all for me. This is my Cross for His sake, the shadow of His Cross for mine.' Be it sickness, pain, anguish, anxiety, sorrow, solitude, it is all one, we may join it to His sorrows and to the darkness of His Cross. In this you will find consolation, strength, guidance, ever fresh and ever near. This will keep your feet in all your ways, be they never so slippery, be they never so strait. His name, through faith in His name, shall hold you up. Live, then, in obedience to that great law, which binds heaven and earth in one. All things on high worship Him ; to Him all things in earth and under the earth bow the knee. The name of Jesus is the law of Angels, Archangels, principalities, and powers ; it is the healing of penitents, the song of God's elect. Be it your motive and your law, and it shall be your strength and stay, your shield and your exceeding great reward."—*Archdeacon Manning*.

I bow at Jesus' name, for 'tis the sign
Of awful mercy towards a guilty line.
Of shameful ancestry, in birth defiled,
And upwards from a child
Full of unlovely thoughts and rebel crimes,
As hastening judgment flames,

How can I lightly view my means of life,
The just assailing sin, and death-stain'd in the strife!

And so, albeit His woe is our release,
Thought of that woe aye dims our earthly peace;
The life is hidden in a fount of blood!

And this is tidings good.
But in the angels' reckoning, and to those
Who angel-wise have chose
And kept, like Paul, a virgin course, content
To go where Jesus went;
But for the many, laden with the spot
And earthly taint of sin, 'tis written, "Touch me
not."

Lyra Apostolica, p. 13.



AUGUST 10TH.—258.

St. Laurence, Deacon and Martyr.

THE fury of the eighth general persecution under the Emperor Valerian had reached its height. It fell most severely on the Christian Bishops, who stood in the foremost ranks of the noble army of Confessors. Orders were issued that none should be spared, and the Bishop of Rome, St. Sixtus II., was led forth to die. St. Laurence, his Archdeacon, then in the flower of his youth, followed him, weeping—not because he lamented his martyrdom, but because his Bishop had left him behind, and he might not share his crown. “Whither art thou going, my father, without thy son?” he cried, as St. Ambrose relates—“whither, O holy Priest, without thy Deacon? Wast thou ever wont to offer the sacrifice without thy Minister? Dost thou refuse me a share in thy bloody death, when thou hast admitted me to the consecration of the Lord’s Blood? Abraham offered his son; Peter sent Stephen before him. O father, let thy

strength be shown in thy son. Offer him whom thou hast trained up."

The Bishop comforted him, saying, "I do not leave thee behind, my son; but a nobler struggle is in store for thee. We, as old men, finish our course by a lighter trial, but, in thy youth, a more glorious triumph awaits thee. Thou shalt soon come after me. Cease to weep. After three days thou shalt follow me. It is fitting that between the Priest and the Deacon this number should intervene. Why dost thou desire a share in my passion? I leave it to thee as an inheritance. Why wish my presence? Let the disciple go before his master!"

He then went to death, and St. Laurence, comforted by the promise that he should soon follow, assembled all the poor Christians together, and divided among them the treasures of the Church, of which as Archdeacon he had the care. Even in their state of poverty and suffering, the Christians had rich chalices and vessels, and golden candlesticks for the service of the altar. These St. Laurence sold, and gave their value to the poor, lest they should fall into the hands of the Pagans. The tyrant, hearing of this distribution, imagined that the Christians were possessed of immense wealth. He summoned the Archdeacon, and commanded him, on pain of the heaviest punishment, to deliver up

the riches of the Church. The Saint confessed that they were very great, and promised on a given day to produce them. He was threatened with death if he should break his word, and then dismissed.

Without delay he gathered together all the poor Christians in Rome, in number about fifteen hundred, with the holy virgins and widows ; and having assembled them at the doors of the Church, he bade the tyrant come and see the treasures he had boasted of. "These," cried he, "are the riches of the Church. For what treasure has Christ more precious than these, in whom He says that Himself is ? As it is written, 'I was hungry and ye gave Me meat ; I was thirsty and ye gave Me drink.' And again, 'Forasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me.' What greater riches hath Jesus than those in whom He loves to be seen ? The earthly gold which you desire is the root of all evil and misery ; but these are the children of light, which is the true wealth. For no chance can destroy it, nor thief take it away. And lest you should think Christ poor, behold these gems, the consecrated virgins and holy widows. These are the precious ornaments of the Church ; arrayed in these, she is lovely in the eyes of Christ, her spouse. Take them then, and adorn your city."

St. Laurence was instantly seized by order of the furious and disappointed tyrant, and condemned to the torture, unless he would renounce Christ. All the efforts of his tormentors were unavailing, and he was sentenced to die. An iron frame, shaped like a gridiron, was prepared, and heated red-hot by live coals underneath, and upon this the Martyr lay bound. Throughout the lingering agony he was wonderfully refreshed by heavenly solaces, and his face showed no sign of suffering. It was calm and unruffled to the last. The newly-baptized alone saw him enriched with unearthly light. His constancy won the hearts of several of the beholders to the true faith. So tranquil was he, that when one side was consumed, he bade his executioners to turn him on the other; and when the fire had done its work upon that too, he said to them, "Now it is ready, you may eat." Thus, as had been foretold, by a yet more glorious martyrdom than his master's, St. Laurence departed unto God.

When Persecution's torrent blaze,
Wraps the unshrinking Martyr's head;
When fade all earthly flowers and bays,
When summer friends are gone and fled,
Is he alone in that dark hour
Who owns the LORD of love and power?

Or waves there not around his brow
A wand no human arm may wield,
Fraught with a spell no angels know,
His steps to guide, his soul to shield?
Thou, Saviour, art his charmed bower,
His magic ring, his rock, his tower.

Christian Year.



AUGUST 18TH.—430.

**St. Augustin, Bishop, Confessor,
and Doctor.**

ST. AUGUSTIN was the son of a pious mother, who had the pain of witnessing for many years his wanderings in doubt and unbelief, who prayed earnestly for his conversion, and was at length blest with the sight of it. From early youth he had given himself up to a course of life quite inconsistent with the profession of a Catechumen, into which he had been admitted in his infancy. In his twentieth year he embraced the Manichean heresy, in which he continued nine years full of anxiety and discomfort, dissatisfied with himself, and despairing of finding the truth. From distress of mind he left his native place and came to Carthage, where he became a teacher of rhetoric, from thence he went to Rome, and lastly to Milan, the city of St. Ambrose, in the year of our Lord, 385.

Ambrose, though weak in voice, had the reputation of eloquence ; and Augustin, who seems

to have gone with introductions to him, and was won by his kindness of manner, attended his sermons with curiosity and interest ; he was insensibly moved by them, though he says, " I listened not in the frame of mind which became me, but in order to see whether his eloquence answered what was reported of it." He determined on leaving the Manicheans, and returning to the state of a catechumen in the Catholic Church, into which he had been admitted by his parents. He began to eye and muse upon the great Bishop of Milan more and more, and tried in vain to penetrate his secret heart, and the thoughts and feelings that swayed him. But Ambrose could not easily be spoken with. When he was not taken up with the Christian people who surrounded him, he was either at his meals, or engaged in private reading. Augustin used to enter, as all persons might, without being announced, but after staying awhile, afraid of interrupting him, he departed again. However, he heard his expositions of Scripture every Sunday, and gradually made progress.

Finding Ambrose thus reserved, though kind and accessible, he went to an aged man named Simplician, who had baptized St. Ambrose, and eventually succeeded him in his See, and opened his heart to him ; but still there was the struggle of two wills within him, the high aspiration and

the habitual inertness. "When Thou, Lord, saidst to me," are his own words in his confessions, "'Wake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,' I could but give the slow and sleepy answer, 'presently,' 'yes, presently,' 'wait awhile,' though that presently was never present, and that while became long." One day when he and his friend Alypius were together, a countryman named Pontitian, who held an office in the imperial court, called on him on some matter of business. As they sat talking, he observed a book upon the table, and on opening it, found it was St. Paul's Epistles. A strict Christian himself, he was agreeably surprised to find an Apostle, where he expected to meet with some work bearing upon Augustin's profession. The discovery fell upon St. Antony, the celebrated Egyptian solitary, and while it added to Pontitian a surprise to find they did not even know his name, they, on the other hand, were still more struck with wonder at the relation of his life and the recent date of it. Hence the conversation passed to the subject of Monasteries, the purity and secretness of their discipline, and the treasures of grace which through them had been manifested in the desert. Pontitian went on to give an account of the conversion of two among his fellow officers, under the following circumstances. When he

was at Treves one afternoon, while the Emperor was in the circus, he happened to stroll out with three companions into the gardens close upon the city wall. After a time they split into two parties, and while he and another went on their way, the other two came upon a cottage, which they were induced to enter. It was the abode of certain recluses, poor in spirit, as Augustin says, of whom is the kingdom of heaven, and here they found the life of St. Antony, which Athanasius had written about twenty years before. One of them began to read it, and, moved by the narrative, they both resolved on adopting the monastic life.

The effect produced upon Augustin was not less, and almost as immediately productive of good. "The more ardently I loved these men," says he, "the more hateful did I seem to myself in comparison of them. Disturbed in countenance and mind I turn upon Alypius. 'What ails us?' say I, 'what is this? what is this story? See the unlearned rise and take heaven by violence, while we, with all our learning, all our want of heart, see where we wallow in flesh and blood.'"

He betook himself to the garden, while Alypius followed him in silent wonder, and sat for awhile in bitter meditation. "At length," he says, "burst forth a mighty storm, bringing with it

a mighty flood of tears, and to indulge it to the full, even unto cries in solitude, I rose up from Alypius, who perceived from my choaked voice how it was with me. He remained where we had been sitting in deep astonishment. I threw myself down under a fig tree, I know not how, and, giving my tears free vent, offered up to Thee the acceptable sacrifice of my streaming eyes ; and I cried, ‘And Thou, O Lord, how long, how long, Lord, wilt Thou be angry ? For ever ? Remember not our old sins,’ for I felt that they were my tyrants. I cried out piteously : ‘How long ? how long ? to-morrow and to-morrow ? why not now ? why not in this very hour put an end to this my vileness ?’ While I thus spoke, with tears in the bitter contrition of my heart, suddenly I heard a voice as if from a house near me, of a boy or girl chanting forth again and again, ‘Take up and read, take up and read !’ Changing countenance at these words, I began intently to think whether boys used them in any game, but could not recollect that I had ever heard them. I left weeping, and rose up, considering it a divine intimation to open the Scriptures and read what first presented itself. I had heard that Antony had come in during the reading of the Gospel, and had taken to himself the admonition : ‘Go sell all that thou hast,’ &c, and had turned to Thee

at once in consequence of that oracle. I had left St. Paul's volume where Alypius was sitting when I rose thence. I returned thither, seized it, opened, and read in silence the following passage, which first met my eyes: 'Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.' I had neither desire nor need to read farther. As I finished the sentence, as though the light of peace had been poured into my heart, all the shadows of doubt dispersed. Thus hast Thou converted me to Thee, so as no longer to seek for hope of this world, standing fast in that rule of faith in which Thou so many years before revealed me to my mother."

These last words refer to a dream which his mother, St. Monica, had, some years before his conversion, revealing to her that he should one day be with her. At another time she was comforted by the casual words of a bishop, who, when importuned by her to converse with her son, said, at length, with some impatience, "Go thy way and God bless thee, for it is not possible that the son of these tears should perish." She saw the fulfilment of these words; she lived till Augustin became a Catholic, and died on her way back to Africa with him. Her last words were, "Lay this body any where, let not the care

of it in any way distress you" (she had before shown, as her son thought, even excessive anxiety to be buried with her husband), "this only I ask, that wherever you be you remember me at the altar of the Lord." "May she," says her son, in dutiful remembrance of her words, "rest in peace with her husband, before and after whom she never had any whom she obeyed with patience, bringing forth fruit unto thee, that she might win him also unto thee." (Patrician, a Pagan, had been won at length by her faith and patience to the faith of Christ.) "And inspire, O Lord God! inspire Thy servants my brethren, Thy sons my masters, whom in heart, voice, and writing, I serve, that as many as read these confessions may at Thy altar remember Monica Thy handmaid, with Patricius her sometime husband, through whom Thou broughtest me to life. May they with pious affection remember those who were my parents in this transitory light, my brethren made Thee our Father in our Catholic Mother, my fellow-citizens in the eternal Jerusalem, after which Thy pilgrim people sigh from their going forth to their return, that so her last request of me may in the prayers of many receive a fulfilment, through my confessions, more abundant than through my prayers."

To return to St. Augustin himself; after due preparation and a course of devotional and peni-

tential exercise, he received baptism from St. Ambrose, and resolving to rid himself of his worldly possessions, except what might be necessary for his bare subsistence, he returned to his native place, Thagaste, there to lead a life at once of retirement and usefulness. His conversion had been followed by that of some of his friends, who joined him, naturally looking up to him as the head of their religious community. After the Apostolical usage, they cast all their property into a common stock, whence distribution was made according to the need of each. Fasting and prayer, alms and Scripture-reading, were their stated occupations.

At the end of three years from his return into Africa, he was admitted, against his will, into holy orders. He seems to have set his heart upon remaining for a time a layman, from a feeling of the responsibility of the ministerial commission, and his reputation having become considerable, he was afraid to approach any place where a Bishop was created, lest he should be forcibly consecrated to the See. Some circumstance, however, at this time called him to Hippo, where, as it happened, a Presbyter was wanted, though a Bishop was not, and the people at once cried out that he should be their pastor. Augustin burst into tears, and some of the people, mistaking the cause, told him by way of comfort,

that though the Priesthood was lower than his desert, yet it stood next to the episcopate. On his coming to Hippo, Valerius, the Bishop, gave him ground on which to build a Monastery, from which other communities soon branched off, forming so many schools for the Church in Africa.

Many years had not passed before Valerius, feeling the infirmities of age, appointed Augustin his coadjutor, in the See of Hippo, and thus secured his succeeding him on his death, an object which he had much at heart. This elevation necessarily made some change in the accidents of Augustin's life, but none in his personal habits. He left his Monastery, as being too secluded to suit with an office obliging its holder to the duties of hospitality, and formed a community of Priests, Deacons, and Sub-deacons, in the See-house. They gave up all personal property, and were supported, like himself, upon a common fund. He considered the property of the See no more his own than his private possessions which he had formerly given up. He employed it in one way or other, directly or indirectly, as the property of the poor, the ignorant, and sinful. He had counted the cost, and he acted like a man whose slowness to begin a course was a pledge of zeal when he had once begun it.

The life of this great Saint of God closed dur-

ing a period of fearful persecution. The coast of Africa, upon which Hippo was situated, was one of the most fruitful and wealthy portions of the Roman world. In the spring of the year, 428, the Vandals, Arians by Creed, and barbarians by birth and manners, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, and brought ruin and desolation over all that fertile district. They pillaged, ravaged, burned, massacred all that came in their way, broke into the Churches, cut to pieces all internal decorations, and then set them on fire, and tortured Bishops and Clergy in the hope of obtaining treasure. The clergy, religious brotherhoods, and holy virgins, were scattered all over the country. The daily service was stopped, the Sacraments could not be obtained, the Festivals of the Church passed unnoticed. St. Augustin was at this time seventy-four years of age, forty almost of which had been passed in ministerial labours ; and warned by the decay of nature of approaching death, it was as if the light of prosperity and peace was falling away from the African Church, as sank the bodily force of its great earthly ornament and King. At this time a neighbouring Bishop wrote to consult him as to the lawfulness of flying from the barbarian invasion. His answer, which is still preserved to us, urged clearly and thoroughly the duty of Bishops and Pastors to remain with their flocks

to the last, lest they be left without the ministrations of the Church. This letter was written on the first entrance of the Vandals into Africa, about two years before they laid siege to Hippo, and during this period of dreadful suspense and excitement, as well as of actual suffering, and the desolation of the Church around him, with the prospect of his own personal trials, we find this unwearied teacher carrying on his works of love by pen and word of mouth, eagerly, as if his time were short, but tranquilly, as if it were a season of prosperity.

At length, events hastened on to a close. Fugitive multitudes betook themselves to Hippo. Boniface, the governor of Africa, a close friend of St. Augustin, threw himself into it for its defence. The Vandals appeared before the walls. Meanwhile, Augustin fell ill. He had about him many of the African Bishops, among others, his friend Possidius, whose account of his last hours is preserved to us. "We used continually to converse together," says Possidius, "about the misfortunes in which we were involved, and contemplated God's tremendous judgments, which were before our eyes, saying, 'Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true are Thy judgments.' One day, at meal time, as we talked together, he said, 'Know ye that in this our present calamity, I pray God to vouchsafe to

rescue this besieged city, or (if otherwise) to give His servants strength to bear His will, or at least to take me to Himself out of this world.' We followed his advice, and both ourselves and our friends, and the whole city, offered up the same prayer with him. On the third month of the siege, he was seized with a fever and took to his bed, and was reduced to the extreme of sickness." Thus the latter part of his prayer was put in train for accomplishment, as the former part was subsequently granted by the retreat of the enemy from Hippo. "He had been used to say," continues Possidius, "that after receiving baptism, even approved Christians and Priests ought not to depart from the body without a fitting and sufficient course of penitence. Accordingly, in the last illness of which he died, he set himself to write out the seven penitential Psalms of David, and to place them against the wall, so that as he lay in bed in the days of his sickness, he could see them. And so he used to read and weep abundantly. And lest his attention should be disturbed by any one, about ten days before his death, he begged us who were with him to hinder persons entering his room, except at the times when his medical attendants came to see him, or his meals were brought him. This was strictly attended to, and all that time given to prayer. Till this last illness he had been able to

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preach the Word of God without intermission, with energy and boldness, with sound and healthy judgment. He slept with his fathers in a good old age, sound in limb, unimpaired in sight and hearing, and as it is written while we stood by, beheld, and prayed with him. We took part in the sacrifice to God at his funeral, and so buried him."

Though the Vandals failed in their first attack upon Hippo, during Augustin's illness, they renewed it successfully after his death. Boniface was defeated, and retired to Italy, and the inhabitants of Hippo left their city. The Vandals entered, and burned it, excepting the library of Augustin, which was providentially preserved.

The desolation was completed by the subsequent invasion of the Saracens. Its five hundred Churches are no more. The voyager gazes on the sullen rocks which line its coasts, and discovers no token of Christianity to cheer the gloom. Hippo has ceased to be an episcopal city ; but its great teacher, though dead, yet speaks ; his voice is gone out into all lands, and his words into the ends of the world. He needs no dwelling-place whose home is the Catholic Church ; he fears no barbarian or heretical desolation, whose Creed is to last unto the end.

The writings of St. Augustin are very numerous ; many of them were composed in refuta-

tion of the Pelagian, Manichean, and other heresies of that age. Of the three great religious orders of the western Church—the Augustinian, the Benedictine, and the Franciscan, the first adopted his rule, and bore his name.

As when the sun hath climbed a cloudy mass,
And looks at noon on some Cathedral dim,
Each limb, each fold, in the translucent glass,
Breaks into hues of radiant seraphim ;

So sainted Bishop ! in the letter'd store,
Which still enfolds thy spirit fled from sight,
Comment, prayer, homily, or learned lore,
Christ bathes each part with His transforming light

Late risen in thee. Thence all is eloquent
With flowing sweetness ; o'er each rising pause
Thou build'st in untired strength ; through all is sent
The word, pleading for His most righteous laws.

For thy sick soul, by baptism's seal relieved,
Deep in her brackish founts the all-healing Cross
received.

Cathedral, p. 295.

AUGUST 29TH.

Beheading of St. John the Baptist.

Say, who is he, in deserts seen,
Or at the twilight hour?
Of garb austere, and dauntless mien,
Measured in speech, in purpose keen,
Calm, as in heaven he had been,
Yet blithe when perils lour?

Lyra Apostolica, p. 202.



SEPTEMBER 1st.—724.

St. Giles, Abbot and Confessor.

ST. GILES OR EGIDIUS, was born at Athens, of noble, or as some say, royal descent, about the middle of the seventh century. While still young he sold his patrimony, and left his native country that he might serve God in retirement. He came into Gaul about 666, and settled himself in a forest near Nismes, with only one companion, who, like himself, lived on the fruits of the earth, and the milk of a hind. As Flavius Wamba, a King of the Goths, was one day hunting in the neighbourhood of Nismes, his dogs pursued her to the hermitage of the Saint, where she took refuge. The King treated him with great reverence, and tried to persuade him to leave his solitude. But finding it in vain, he gave him land for the endowment of a Monastery, which was gradually filled with Monks of the Benedictine order.

In the government of this house St. Giles spent more than fifty years of his life. During the invasion of the Saracens, in 720, he fled with his Monks into the interior of France, and was invited by Charles Martel to take refuge at Orleans, where his court then was; but on the defeat of the infidels, St. Giles returned to his Abbey, and died there in 725.

Ye hermits blest, ye holy maids,
The nearest heaven on earth,
Who talk with God in shadowy glades,
Free from rude care and mirth;
To whom some viewless teacher brings
The secret lore of rural things,
The moral of each fleeting cloud and gale,
The whispers from above, that haunt the twilight
vale.

Say, when in pity ye have gazed
On the wreath'd smoke afar,
That o'er some town, like mist uprais'd
Hang hiding sun and star,
Then as ye turn'd your weary eye
To the green earth and open sky,
Were ye not fain to doubt how faith could dwell
Amid that dreary glare, in this world's citadel.

Christian Year, p. 318.

SEPTEMBER 7TH.—340.

St. Enurchus, Bishop.

ST. ENURCHUS OR ENURTIUS, a Subdeacon of the Roman Church, came into Gaul early in the fourth century. More than fifty years before, a band of missionaries had been sent from Rome to preach the faith in that country, as we have already seen in the life of St. Lucian. St. Enurchus was chosen Bishop of Orleans, where he built a church in honour of the Holy Cross, and after labouring there for more than twenty years, and having converted nearly the whole city to the Christian faith, he was taken to his rest about the year 340.

It seemed the gathering of past years,
The place of penitence and tears :
And where in cell or roofless shrine
The saintly dead in peace recline,
In thoughts of them that slumber by,
We seem to feel the judgment nigh,

And from the fellowship that's there,
Shrink with a something like despair ;
To think that when we rise again,
We must awake 'mid holy men ;
'Mid those who so could live and die
With pure resolve and purpose high,
As thus to leave for days to come,
A fragrance breathing o'er their tomb.

Baptistery, p. 193.

SEPTEMBER 8TH.

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Holiest of women ! whom the heavenly King
Chose for Himself, in earthly shrine inurn'd ;
Happiest of women ! for in thee, the spring
Of all our woes back to its fount was turn'd ;
Most honour'd cloud—wherein light's centre burn'd ;
But then dishonour'd most, when thou art seen
An idol, God and man to stand between.

Alas ! man's heart, in sinful consciousness,
Some fond and frail illusion still will frame,
Which to the house of health may find access,
Without repentance, or a sinner's shame :
There is one only all-prevailing name,
But unto Him none but the pure can look,
None but the penitent His presence brook.

Blessed was she on whose retirement broke
That angel form, the star portending morn ;
And blessed she, upon whose bosom woke,
And slept, the Eternal Child, the Virgin born,
Who like a robe the heaven of heavens had worn ;
But oh ! more blessed, Lord, by Thy dear name,
Is he who hears Thy word and keeps the same.

For not in thee, thou maiden-mother mild,
As superstition deem'd, 'tis not in thee
That we rejoice, meek mother undefil'd,
But in our God alone both thou and we ;
For thou wast compass'd with humanity,
And Christ alone thy light, thy strength, thy tower,
Thine innocence, thy victory, thy dower.

Nor at thy feet adore we, though so bright
Upon thy head the gleams of ages pour,
But with that church rejoice, whose orient light
Shadow'd thee forth in women fam'd of yore,
With Hannah sung, and Miriam on the shore,
"The Lord Himself hath triumphed gloriously,
And thrown the horse and rider in the sea."

Cathedral, p. 234.



SEPTEMBER 14TH.—335.

Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

ON the spot where St. Helena had discovered the Cross, her son, the Emperor Constantine, built a stately Basilica, inclosing also the Holy Sepulchre. It contained two churches, one in honour of the Holy Cross, and the other of the Resurrection, and is named indifferently from either of them. He also built a church on the Mount of Olives, in remembrance of the Lord's Ascension. The site of Calvary and of the Holy Sepulchre, originally without the city wall, had been included within it when Jerusalem was rebuilt by the Emperor Adrian.

On the thirteenth of September, 335, Constantine's new Basilica was solemnly consecrated, and on the following day, which was Sunday, the Holy Cross was exposed from a lofty place to the veneration of the people. In memory of this

event, this day is called the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. On the same day the Eastern Church commemorates the appearance of a bright cross in the heavens to the Emperor Constantine, on the eve of the battle which made him Emperor of the West.

Constantine had succeeded to the Western empire on the death of his father, Constantius Chlorus, in 306, but in 312, Maxentius came against him with a numerous army to dispute his right. Constantine was not then a Christian, but as he drew near Rome, where his enemy was awaiting him, he called on the true God for aid. On the day before he was to give battle to Maxentius, about noon, he saw a bright cross of light in the sky just above the sun, and upon it was written, in Greek letters, "In this conquer." It was seen by the whole army. In the following night our Lord appeared to him and commanded him to use an image of the cross he had seen as his standard of battle. Constantine obeyed, and going forth under its protection, he defeated the superior army of Maxentius in a desperate battle, Maxentius himself being drowned in crossing the Tyber.

The famous standard of Constantine, called the Labarum, was a cross of wood plated with gold, and surmounted by a crown or chaplet of precious stones, encircling the holy monogram ;

from the transverse part hung a purple banner studded with jewels, and above it were the figures of the Emperor and his children. Fifty chosen men of his guard were appointed to carry it before him in turn whenever he went to battle. Every legion had a like standard, and the cross and the holy name were stamped upon the Emperor's helmet and the shields of his soldiers. A fiery cross is said to have been seen in the air not long before the destruction of Jerusalem, but the cross of light which brought Constantine to the faith of Christ, was a harbinger of love and not of wrath. It is an ancient belief in the Church, that once again the standard of the Cross will be seen in heaven going before the Judge of quick and dead to the awful doom. "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven." "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn," but they that have borne their Cross after Him, shall look up and lift up their heads and see the sign in which they have conquered, through Him who hath made them more than conquerors.

Is this the standard of a king?

It is the Cross, that sign of mystery;
 The wood on which, like some accursed thing,
 The world's great Maker deign'd to die;
 Where He sustain'd the lance's iron wound,
 Whence for our souls water and blood abound.

Blessed and blessed-making tree,
From what most noble stock didst thou arise,
That thou shouldst touch those limbs, the bearer be
Of Him, the mighty sacrifice,
Who, drop by drop, the world's price told that day,
And rescued from hell's jaws the living prey.

Hail! Holy Cross! sole refuge, hail!
Blessed memorial of our suffering Lord;
In our grief's bitter waters so prevail,
That they to us may health afford:
So may devotion gain a holier mind,
And penitence therein may pardon find.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 124.



SEPTEMBER 16TH.—258.

St. Cyprian, Archbishop and Martyr.

THASCIUS CYPRIAN, "the most sweet Doctor and blessed Martyr," as St. Augustin calls him, was a native of Africa, and eminent for his philosophy and eloquence. His family was of senatorial rank in the city of Carthage. He was originally a Pagan, but when bearing on old age it pleased God to turn his heart. Before his conversion, the self-denial and purity exacted by the law of Christ, seemed to him impossible. "It appeared to me extremely hard," he said, "to be born again to a new life, and to become another man, still keeping the same body. 'How can one at once get rid of rooted and hardened habits, which arise either from nature itself, or from long custom?' I often thus held converse with myself; but when the life-giving water had washed away the sins of my past life, and my cleansed heart had received light from on high,

and the heavenly Spirit, I was amazed how my doubts vanished away—all was open, all was clear ; and I found easy what had appeared to me impossible, so as to acknowledge that whatsoever is born according to the flesh, and lives in crime, is of the earth, and that whatsoever is enlivened by the Holy Spirit, cometh from God ?”

The conversion of St. Cyprian was a great subject of grief to the Pagans, and his untiring zeal soon drew upon him a storm of persecution, which ended in his martyrdom. His first act as a Christian was to sell all his goods and give to the poor. He was presently made a presbyter of the Church at Carthage, and soon after elected Bishop. His great desire was now to exhort the brethren to holiness of life by all the examples of piety held out in Holy Scripture. He had a particular friendship with Cecilius, an aged presbyter, and a just man, who had brought him out of the errors of false religion to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Cyprian always honoured, venerated, and loved this Priest, not merely as an ordinary friend, but as a father from whom he had derived his new life ; and when the time came for Cecilius to leave this world, he commended his wife and children to Cyprian's care.

Cyprian had been very unwilling to undertake

the office of a Bishop, feeling himself unworthy of so great an honour, but was overcome at last by the entreaties of his people. With some who had opposed his election he dealt so patiently and gently, that he won them to be his most attached friends. "Who can sufficiently describe his conduct," says his deacon Pontius; "what piety, what vigour, what mercy, what discipline! So much sanctity and grace was resplendent in his countenance, that they who beheld him were amazed. His look was at once serious and joyful, neither severely sad, nor overmuch mild and gentle, but a mingling together of both, so that one might have doubted whether he were most to be loved or feared, had he not deserved to be both one and the other. His dress was not unsuited to his countenance—moderate, and temperate. No worldly pride inflated him, nor did any affected penury in dress render his appearance mean, for this sort of clothing, no less than ostentatious and ambitious splendour, arises from vain-glory." St. Cyprian devoted himself especially to the care of the poor.

While he was thus engaged, the persecution under the Emperor Decius began with great severity. The heathen populace at Carthage cried out in the theatre, demanding that Cyprian should be thrown to the lions. He retired for a

time into the country. During his absence a discontented presbyter, named Novatus, formed a party in the Church of Carthage, and after a time separated from its communion. Another Priest, named Novation, began a like schism at Rome. Upon his return to Carthage, St. Cyprian wrote a treatise on the unity of the Church in condemnation of these divisions. A difference afterwards arose between the Churches of Africa and that of Rome, upon the proper mode of receiving converts from sects in which they had already received baptism. St. Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, held that they should receive only imposition of hands; St. Cyprian that they should be rebaptized, as considering their former baptism invalid. The opinion of St. Stephen was afterwards sanctioned by the Church.

A dreadful pestilence at one time raged in Carthage, and so great a terror had seized the people, that the rich were left to perish; all natural affections seemed to be extinguished, and multitudes of dead bodies were cast into the streets, and lay neglected there. St. Cyprian assembled the believers, and exhorted them to works of piety by the examples set forth in Holy Scripture. He then gave each person his share in the work of charity; the poor brought their labour, and the rich their wealth, and so abun-

dant relief was ministered, not only to Christians but to the heathen. St. Cyprian at this time wrote a book to encourage his people, reminding them that death ought to be a subject of joy and not of fear to the true believer. He was soon afterwards called to bear witness to the faith of Christ in the face of torture and death, nor did he shrink from the trial.

In 257, the eighth general persecution began under Valerian. St. Stephen was the first in Rome to suffer martyrdom. He was succeeded by St. Sixtus, whom we have already seen going before his deacon, St. Laurence, on the path of glory. On the 30th of August in the same year, St. Cyprian was brought before Paternus, the proconsul. When he was asked his name, he replied, "I am a Christian and a Bishop. I know no other gods than the true God alone, who hath made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that they contain. He is the God whom we serve, we and other Christians, and to whom we pray night and day for ourselves and for all men, even for the Emperors." Threats failed to move him, or to make him give up the names of his clergy, and he was banished to Curuba, a small town on the coast, about fifty miles from Carthage. The public assemblies of the Christians were forbidden on pain of death.

The Christian inhabitants of Curuba wel-

comed St. Cyprian with joy, and comforted him by their visits. On his first night there he had a vision foretelling his coming martyrdom. The Christians in Africa shared the honour of his confession. Nine Bishops, with some of the Clergy, and many of the laity, including women and children, were cruelly beaten and condemned to the mines. They were loaded with chains, made their bed on the bare earth, and endured cold and hunger, and every misery. But their greatest privation was the being unable to celebrate the Christian mysteries. St. Cyprian consoled them in a letter, and besought them to call upon God without ceasing, to give them grace to finish their confession to His honour. This little company of martyrs sealed their confession with their blood, to the number of about three hundred.

St. Cyprian remained in Curuba about eleven months, busily engaged in settling the affairs of the Church and the poor, against his departure from this world. As soon as he was allowed to return to Carthage, he distributed all his remaining property amongst the poor.

The persecution daily grew hotter ; Cyprian diligently instructed his flock, urging the Bishops to prepare the people for martyrdom, and to bid them look forward to immortality rather than to death. Many senators and persons of influence

in Carthage entreated him to move further from the scene of danger. He at first refused, but afterwards concealed himself for a while, because he feared to be taken to Utica, where the proconsul then was, desiring rather to make his last confession among his own children at Carthage.

When the proconsul returned to Carthage, St. Cyprian went back to his house, which stood in a garden in the suburbs. On the 13th of September officers arrived to take him. They thought to surprise him, but he was waiting for them. They placed him in a chariot and carried him to a country seat of the governor about six miles off. St. Cyprian wore a gay and cheerful countenance, for he thought he was going to instant death. But he was remanded till next day, and was lodged during that night in the house of the chief officer in Carthage. His friends were allowed to take supper with him, and to spend the rest of the time in his company. The news that he was taken was spread through the city, and a vast concourse of people had assembled at the house, some to compassionate his sufferings, and others to strengthen their own faith by witnessing his constancy. His charities had won the hearts of all the people. The Christians passed the night in the streets, fearing lest anything might happen without

their seeing it. The holy Bishop, still watchful over his flock, sent special orders that care should be taken of the young maidens in the crowd.

Slowly the night wore away, and the morning of the 14th of September, 258, dawned upon Carthage. Cyprian was summoned before the governor. He was attended by his faithful people to the hall of justice, which was distant about a furlong from the chief officer's house. The proconsul was not ready when they arrived, and a seat was provided for the Confessor in a retired place. It was observed that it was covered with a linen cloth, such as usually marked the chair of a Bishop.

At length St. Cyprian stood before Galerius, and was asked, "Art thou Thascius Cyprian?" "I am." "Art thou esteemed as a father by sacrilegious persons?" "I am." "The most sacred Emperors command thee to offer sacrifice." "I will not obey." "Be advised." "Do what thou art commanded; in a matter so plain, there is no need of advice." The governor now pronounced sentence in this form: "Because thou hast lived for a long time in sacrilege, and hast assembled in wicked conspiracy so many persons, and hast been the open enemy of the Roman gods, and the sacred laws; and because thou art the author and standard-bearer of most

heinous crimes, thou shalt be a warning to those whom thou hast associated with thee in sin; the law shall be avenged by thy blood." Then he wrote upon a tablet, "Thascius Cyprian shall be punished by the sword." To which the Bishop answered, "Deo gratias—Thanks be to God." The people cried aloud that they were willing to die with him.

The soldiers then led him into the country, to a place surrounded by trees, into which many climbed to witness his passion. As soon as they had arrived, Cyprian threw off his mantle, and remained a long time prostrate in prayer. He then laid aside his dalmatic, a kind of tunic then commonly worn, and so called after the province of Dalmatia, where it was first used. He gave the executioner twenty-five pieces of gold. With his own hands he bound his eyes. His deacon and subdeacon tied his hands. The Christians spread cloths around him to catch his blood. At length the sword fell, and the soul of the Martyr Bishop went to join the white-robed army in heaven.

The lions prowl around, thy grave to guard,
And Moslem prayers profane
At morn and eve come sounding; yet, unscared,
The holy shades remain;

Cyprian, thy chief of watchmen wise and bold,
Trusting the love of his own loyal heart,
And Cyprian's Master, as in age high-soul'd,
Yet choosing as in youth the better part.
There, too, unwearied Austin, thy keen gaze
On Atlas' steep, a thousand years and more,
Dwells, waiting for the first rekindling rays,
When Truth upon the solitary shore,
For the fallen West may light his beacon as of yore.

Cathedral, p. 282.



SEPTEMBER 17TH.—709.

St. Lambert, Bishop and Martyr.

ST. LAMBERT, or Landebert, was the son of rich and noble parents in the city of Maestricht. His family had professed the Christian faith for many generations. His father carefully instructed him in sacred learning, and sent him to St. Theodred, Bishop of Maestricht, to finish his studies. On the death of St. Theodred, St. Lambert was chosen to succeed him. France was at this time torn to pieces by civil wars, and, on the murder of King Childeric, St. Lambert was driven into exile, and his See filled by another. He retired with two of his servants into a Monastery, where he spent the seven following years in strict observance of the rule. As an instance of his obedience and humility, we are told that as he was rising one winter's night to his private devotions, he happened to let fall his wooden sandal or slipper with a loud noise,

and the Abbot, thinking that some one had broken the rule of silence, sent an order that the brother who had made the noise should go and pray before the Cross which stood in the open air, near the door of the Church. Without making any answer, St. Lambert laid down the upper garment which he was in the act of putting on, and went out as he was, barefoot, and hardly covered, and remained kneeling before the Cross for three or four hours. While the Monks were warming themselves after the matins, the Abbot inquired who was absent? They replied that the brother whom he had sent to the Cross, had not returned. He immediately sent for him, and when he discovered that it was the holy Bishop of Maestricht, he threw himself at his feet with the community, and asked his pardon. St. Lambert, who was covered with snow and almost frozen, only answered, "God forgive you for thinking you need pardon for what you have done. As for myself, is it not in cold and nakedness, that, like St. Paul, I am to serve God?"

In 677, another revolution recalled St. Lambert to his See. He devoted himself to the conversion of the Pagans of Brabant, winning them to the true faith by his patient zeal, regenerating them in baptism, and destroying many of their temples and idols. He frequently visited St.

Willibrord, the Apostle of Friesland, and companion of St. Boniface.

St. Lambert had offended Pepin, the lord of Unstat, by boldly denouncing his immoral life. Two of Pepin's retainers had also plundered the Church of Maestricht, which so much enraged the relations of St. Lambert, that, without his knowledge, they attacked the spoilers and put them to death. Dodo, a powerful officer of Pepin, and a near relation of the men who had been slain, vowed vengeance against the innocent Bishop. He assembled a body of armed men, and forced his way into St. Lambert's house, who was resting himself after matins. The Bishop's first instinctive act was to sieze a sword, but he instantly threw it away, and forbade his nephews to fight in his defence, saying to them, "If you love me truly, love Jesus Christ, and confess your sins to Him. As for me, it is time that I go to live with Him." He also reminded them that they were guilty of murder, and deserved punishment. Then sending every one out of the room, he threw himself on the ground, stretching out his arms in the shape of a cross. Thus he lay patiently awaiting his enemies, who soon rushed in, slew him with a lance, and put his nephews and all his servants to the sword. From this unjust death, endured with such patience and meekness, and the eminent

sanctity of his life, he has been considered in the Church as a Martyr.

Therefore to you the choirs of Heaven arise
In reverence. Key stones are ye, every one,
In God's sure house ; fountains of benison,
Which Christ, the mighty sea of love, supplies ;
Visible angels lighting lower skies ;
How may we praise—how style you ? call'd alone
To sit in sackcloth on Christ's earthly throne,
Channels of living waters ? golden ties,
From Christ's meek cradle to His throne on high ?
Bright shower-drops sparkling from God's orb'd light ?
We hide our eyes, and ask what vesture bright
Shall clothe you, gather'd or from earth or sky,
Ye chiefest servants of a suffering Lord,
The King of shame and sorrow ? what afford
Sky-tinctur'd grain to robe you ? other dress
Faith owns not, save her Master's lowliness.

Cathedral, p. 47.



SEPTEMBER 30TH.—420.

St. Jerome, Priest, Confessor, and Doctor.

ST. JEROME was born at Idrigni, a small town on the confines of Pannonia, Dalmatia, and Italy, about 342. He was sent by his father, who was a rich man, to be educated at Rome, where he made great progress in learning. He was not yet baptized, and fell into many of the temptations of that great city; yet even then he had a desire after better things, and has himself described how he and others of his age and inclinations used to go on Sundays to visit the catacombs and burying places beneath the earth, where the bodies of the holy Apostles and Martyrs rested.

When he had finished his studies, he pleaded for some time successfully at the bar, and afterwards, still further to improve himself in human learning, he travelled into Gaul, to visit several schools of learning there. At Treves his heart was converted to God; he re-

nounced all earthly affections, and dedicated himself wholly to the divine service. He received the grace of baptism, and lived for some time in a Monastery of religious men, at Aquileia.

In 373, he went with three companions to the East, that he might study and meditate undisturbed amidst the scenes of our redemption. He retired to the desert of Chaleida, between Syria and Arabia. One of his friends supplied him with books, but he supported himself chiefly by the labour of his hands, devoting himself also to study, during the four years that he spent there. Two of his companions died, the other left him, and went home. He was afflicted by frequent sickness, and still more by the remembrance of his former sinful life. By the exercise of severe self-denial, he was at last delivered from the bitterness of these feelings. He applied himself, as a punishment for his former self-indulgent way of life, to studying Hebrew. After being many times tempted to give up his task in despair, he gained a perfect knowledge of the language, which he found afterwards of great benefit in his sacred studies. There was at this time a bitter discussion in the Eastern Churches about the succession to the See of Antioch. St. Jerome was so wearied out by the disputes upon this subject, among the Monks in the desert, that he

left it, and went to Jerusalem, and afterwards to Bethlehem. At Antioch he was ordained Priest, but thought himself so unworthy of the office that it was long before he would exercise it. In 380, he went to Constantinople, to study Holy Scripture under St. Gregory Nazianzen, and in 382 he was again at Rome. There he gave much of his time to the instruction and directing of several holy women, who earnestly desired his teaching. St. Marcella, who had been left a widow forty years before, in the seventh month after her marriage, and having dedicated herself to God, was living in retirement near Rome, with her daughter Principia. Her mother Albina, and her sister Asella, who had lived for forty years in religious seclusion, and in great austerity even from her tenth year, were among St. Jerome's friends. The most illustrious of these "elect ladies" was St. Paula, both for her rank and descent, and for her lowliness of demeanour, and abounding charity. Eustochium, her daughter, was like her in sanctity and devotion. In 385, St. Jerome returned to Palestine, and continued his study of the Hebrew language, probably in his old retreat at Bethlehem. He lived in the practice of the severest mortification, supplying his bodily wants with the meanest fare, and giving a part of his time to the instruction of children.

In the year after St. Jerome left Rome, St. Paula, with her daughter, St. Eustochium, followed him, and after visiting Jerusalem, she came to Bethlehem, and founded two Monasteries in its neighbourhood, one for St. Jerome, and the Monks who lived with him, the other for the Nuns who had joined her. St. Jerome, about the same time, with the remainder of his family property, endowed a hospital for relieving pilgrims. We may learn something of the discipline of those houses of religion from St. Jerome's writings. "After the Monastery of Men, which she gave up to be governed by men," he thus writes to Eustochium, when the holy Paula had been taken to her eternal rest, "she gathered together many virgins from different provinces, as well noble as of the middle and lower ranks, and divided them into three troops or Monasteries, yet so that during work and meals they might be separated, but might be united in psalms and prayers. In the morning, at the hours of terce, sext, none, at vespers, and at midnight, they sang through the Order of the Psalter. Neither was any sister allowed to be ignorant of the Psalms, nor did they fail on any day to learn something of the holy Scriptures. On the Lord's-day only they went to the Church by the side of which they lived. Each troop followed its own Mother, and thence returning to-

gether, they occupied themselves in the work which was assigned them, and made garments, either for themselves or others. They lived in strict seclusion, were all dressed alike, and had all things in common except their habits. They fasted much, and used no ornaments nor undue carefulness in dress. They were counselled to avoid much talking and mirth." A blessed Sister of Mercy in the fourth age, is thus pictured in the character given by St. Jerome of St. Paula herself. "Why need I commemorate the clemency and assiduity shown to the sick, whom she cherished with wondrous attention and ministries. When others languished, she provided all things for them in abundance, in this only she seemed unjust, that if she herself were sick, she turned her clemency towards others into hardness towards herself."

On the 26th of January, 404, St. Paula was taken to a better life, in her fifty-seventh year. St. Jerome thus describes her departure. "As if she were going to her beloved friends, and was about to leave strangers, she murmured 'Lord, I have loved the honour of Thine house, and the place of the habitation of Thy glory,' and 'how lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts.' I asked her if she was in any pain? She replied, in the Greek language, that she felt no uneasiness, but beheld all things serene and tranquil.

Then she was silent, and closing her eyes, as if turning away from mortal things, she repeated the same verses till she breathed out her soul, and we could hardly hear what she said. Putting her finger to her mouth, she made the sign of the cross upon her lips. At length her spirit failed, and she sighed in death. Her soul, labouring to break loose, turned the very sound with which the life of mortals is finished, into the praising of her Lord." She was borne on the shoulders of Bishops to her tomb, in the Church of the Nativity, at Bethlehem ; the poor widows and orphans whom she had nourished, mourned for her as a mother. St. Eustochium, her daughter, succeeded her in the government of her Convent.

Eleven years afterwards, St. Jerome departed in peace. None of the circumstances of his end have been recorded, but it was said of him, that whether he was eating or drinking, or whatever he was doing, the awful trumpet of the doom was ever sounding in his ears. " Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." " Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall so find watching."

In learning, St. Jerome is said to have surpassed almost all the ancient fathers ; and his learning was constantly exercised in the refutation of the various heresies which then troubled

the Church, especially that of Pelagius, whose followers so hated him, that they burned both the Monasteries founded by St. Paula; and St. Jerome only saved his life by flight. But his greatest work was the translation of the holy Scriptures into Latin, generally known by the name of the Latin Vulgate. The last of St. Jerome's letters which remains, is one written to St. Augustin, like himself, engaged in controversy with the Pelagian heretics, thanking him for his labours in defence of the faith, and expressing an earnest desire to see him.

The peaceful star of Bethlehem
Came o'er thy solitude,
The radiance of the heavenly gem
Lit up thy sterner mood;
Yea, like a star in murky wells,
Cheering the bed where darkness dwells,
The images of earth its happier light endued.
The thought of the Eternal Child,
Upon thy cloistral cell,
Must sure have cast an influence mild,
And, like a holy spell,
Have peopled that far eastern night
With dreams meet for an eremite,
Beside that cradle poor, bidding the world farewell.

Cathedral, p. 297.

OCTOBER 1st.—533.

St. Remigius, Bishop.

ST. REMIGIUS was the son of a nobleman of Gaul, and was born at Laon. When his mother was a very old woman, it was foretold to her that she should have a son, who should be the cause of salvation to many. Remigius was born about the year 450. From his childhood he was remarkable for his gravity and thoughtfulness, and his kindness to all around him. He left his father's house that he might live a life more retired from the world, and spent the greater part of his time in watching, fasting, and prayer. So eminent did he become in holiness, that he was elected by unanimous consent to be Bishop of Rheims, in the twenty-second year of his age. The earliest historian of his life describes him thus : " He was liberal in alms, devout in prayer, sedulous in vigils, perfect in charity, abased in humility, distinguished in doctrine, ready in

speech, most holy in conversation. He showed the sincerity of his mind in the serenity of his countenance, and the gentleness of his heart in the sweetness of his discourse. He taught by deeds rather than by words." He was thought the most eloquent man of his time. Many miracles are said to have been performed by him. The prediction that he should be the cause of salvation to many was thus fulfilled.

The Franks, a people from the east of the Rhine, had overspread Gaul, as the Saxons overran Britain. They subdued the Gauls, but instead of driving them out of their country, as the Saxons did the Britons, they mixed with them, and adopted their manners and language. They had not yet, however, embraced their religion, for the Gauls were Christians, and the Franks, and their King Clovis, were still pagans. Pagan as he was, Clovis, in his wars, often made his followers respect the property of the Church. On one occasion, he ordered a rich vessel, which had been carried away from the Church of Rheims, to be restored at the request of St. Remigius. And when the plunderer refused to part with it, he killed him with his own hand.

Clotildis, his queen, was a Christian, and earnestly desired his conversion. For a long time her words and her prayers seemed unavailing. Her eldest son, Ingomer, was baptized at

her desire, but died within a week afterwards. Clovis reproached the Queen as having caused the child's death, by what he called her superstitious rites. But she meekly replied, "I thank my God that He has thought me worthy to bear a child whom He has called to His kingdom." Their second son was also baptized by the name of Clodomir. He too was at the point of death, and the King was in despair. But God granted his life to his mother's tears, and at length rewarded her piety by the conversion of her husband. Thus it happened. The army of Clovis was engaged in a desperate battle. The day seemed irrecoverably lost, when the King cried out in an agony, "O Jesus Christ, whom Clotildis calls the Son of the living God, if Thou wilt give me victory over my enemies, I will believe in Thee, and be baptized in Thy name." He gained the victory, and prepared to fulfil his vow. He sought the aid of St. Vedast, a holy Priest, who instructed him in the Christian doctrine. The Queen heard of his change with joy, and secretly sent for St. Remigius, to come and receive the King into the Church. Clovis persuaded his nobles, and many of the people, to follow his example. Three thousand of them received holy baptism with him, on Christmas-day, in the same year, at Rheims. As St. Remigius led the royal catechumen to the font,

he said, "Bow thy neck in meekness, O Sicambrian, adore what thou hast hitherto burnt, and burn what thou hast hitherto adored."

Thus of all the States of modern Europe, the kingdom of the Franks was the first to embrace the religion of the Cross. And hence "the most Christian King of France" has ever borne the honourable title of eldest son of the Church.

St. Remigius was made Primate of Gaul, and devoted himself to complete the conversion of the whole nation to Christ. He received power, it is said, to work many miracles in confirmation of his doctrine, and persuaded the people to destroy their idols.

He died in a good old age (as is supposed), about the year 533, having survived Clovis, his son, in the faith, about twenty years. Rheims has ever since his age been the metropolitan See of France.

By Jericho's doom'd towers who stands on high,
With helmet, spear, and glittering panoply ?

"The Christian soldier, like a gleaming star

"Train'd in the wilderness to iron war."

Take off thy shoes, thy promised land is found,
The place thou standest on is holy ground.

"Take thou the shield and buckler, stop the way

"Against mine enemies ! we then may stay !"

I am thy rock, thy castle ; I am He

Whose feet have dried up the Egyptian sea :

Fear not, for I am with thee ; put on might ;
'Gainst thrones and powers of darkness is the fight.

“ I go, if Thou go with me ; ope the skies,

“ And lend me Heav'n—attemper'd armouries.”

Gird Truth about thee for thy mailed dress,
And for thy breast-plate put on Righteousness ;
For sandals, beauteous Peace ; and for thy sword
The two-edg'd might of God's unfailing word ;
Make golden Hope thy helmet : on, and strive :
He that o'ercometh, in those courts shall live.
Whose crystal floor by heavenly shapes is trod,
“ A pillar in the temple of my God.”

Cathedral, p. 248.



OCTOBER 6TH.

St. Faith, Virgin and Martyr.

ST. FAITH was the daughter of Christian parents, in Agen, a city of Aquitaine, in Gaul. She suffered in the reign of Maximian, the colleague of the Emperor Dioclesian, about the year 290. Dacian was at that time Governor of Gaul.

St. Faith was young and very beautiful, but cared nothing for her beauty, nor for any of the pomps and vanities of the world, and so she was ready to give up all for Christ's sake, and He who gave her such love to him, gave her strength to bear, for His love, such dreadful tortures as we can hardly bear to hear or read of. This is the account of her martyrdom.

When she was brought before Dacian, she made the sign of the Cross, in token that she was not "ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified," and said this prayer: "Lord Jesus, who art always ready to help those who serve

Thou, strengthen me in this hour, that I may answer as befits Thy servant."

The tyrant spoke to her gently at first, and asked her her name? She answered, "my name is Faith, and I try to be like my name." "What is your religion?" said the Governor, and Faith answered, "I have served Christ from my infancy, and to Him I have consecrated my whole soul." Then Dacian said, "Come, child, have some regard to your youth and beauty; renounce Christ, and sacrifice to Diana, a divinity of your own sex, who will give you every thing you can desire." But the maiden replied, "The gods of the Gentiles are devils, how can you bid me sacrifice to them?" The heathen judge answered furiously: "What, do you presume to call our gods devils? prepare to offer sacrifice to them instantly, or you shall die in torments." The Saint thought of the Crown of Life prepared for those who shall be found faithful unto death, and she said, with a calm voice: "I am not only ready to suffer every torment for Christ, but I even long to die for him." Dacian, more enraged than ever, ordered a brazen bed to be brought, and the Saint to be bound on it with iron chains. A great fire was kindled under it, the heat of which was made still more intolerable by the addition of oil and other inflammable matter. The bystanders were struck with pity and horror,

and cried out : " How can the tyrant thus torture an innocent young maiden, only for worshipping God ?" Many were converted by the sight of her constancy, and refusing to sacrifice, were beheaded with St. Faith.

This is all that is known of this young girl, whom the Holy Church throughout all the world has enrolled among God's Saints. We know but this only, that she had "served Christ from her infancy," and had "consecrated her whole soul to His service." This was her preparation for a Martyr's crown. She was very young when she was called to her fiery trial, and had therefore probably had few *great* opportunities of doing Him service before—perhaps not more nor greater than any young girl of our own days. But little trials and daily self-denials, well borne, are like stepping-stones to greater. And, therefore, it may be, that when our Lord would call forth one to witness for Him before the heathen, He chose this young and tender maiden, and crowned her lowly life with martyrdom, and wrought the conversion of her people by the power of her patient suffering, because His eye had seen (and perhaps no eye but His) that she served Him with her whole soul in little things.

What time the Saviour spread His feast,
For thousands on the mountain's side,

One of the last and least,
The abundant store supplied.

Haply, the wonders to behold,
A boy 'mid other boys he came,
A lamb of Jesus' fold,
Though now unknown by name.

Or for his sweet obedient ways
The apostles brought him near, to share
Their Lord's laborious days,
His frugal casket bear.

Or might it be his duteous heart,
That led him sacrifice to bring
For his own simple part,
To the world's hidden King.

Well, may I guess how glow'd his cheek,
How he look'd down, half pride, half fear :
Far off he saw one speak
Of him in Jesus' ear.

"There is a lad—five loaves hath he,
And fishes twain :—but what are they,
Where hungry thousands be ?"
Nay, Christ will find a way.

In order, on the fresh green hill,
The mighty Shepherd ranks His sheep
By tens and fifties, still
As clouds when breezes sleep.

Oh, who can tell the trembling joy,
Who paint the grave endearing look,
When from that favoured boy
The wondrous pledge He took ?

Keep then, dear child, thine early word,
Bring Him thy best ; who knows but He,
For His eternal board,
May take some gift of thee ?

Thou prayest without the veil as yet ;
But kneel in faith : an arm benign
Such prayer will duly set
Within the holiest shrine.

And prayer has might to spread and grow,
Thy childish darts, right-aim'd on high,
May catch Heaven's fire, and glow
Far in the eternal sky.

Even as He made that stripling's store
Type of the Feast by Him decreed,
Where angels might adore,
And souls for ever feed.



END OF THE THIRD CENTURY.—October 7th.

St. Denys, Bishop and Martyr.

It is uncertain who first planted the Gospel in Gaul. Some say St. Paul, or his disciple, Cresceus (see 2. Tim. iv. 10), others St. Luke. St. Pothinus, the first Bishop of Lyons, who, with a noble company of Christians, suffered Martyrdom in 177, is said to have been a scholar of St. Polycarp, the disciple of St. John. His successor, St. Irenæus, certainly was.

After the martyrdom of St. Irenæus, in 202, the Churches of Gaul suffered such severe persecution, that the light of faith was nearly put out in the southern provinces. About 245, St. Fabian, Bishop of Rome, taking pity on their forlorn condition, sent seven missionary Bishops into Gaul, with a number of inferior Clergy. They were not at first appointed to any particular Sees, but were sent to preach throughout the country. Among them was St. Denys or Dionysius, the future Bishop of Paris.

When St. Denys landed at Arles, he found a few Christians there, among whom he stayed for a little while, to encourage them, and, as some say, to consecrate a Church. He then went northwards, and fixed his episcopal See at Paris, while his companions, St. Crispin, St. Quentin, and other blessed Confessors, carried the Gospel into still more distant parts. At length the storm of persecution fell upon the infant Church, and St. Denys, with his Priest, and Archdeacon, St. Rusticus, and St. Eleutherius, were enrolled among its early Martyrs, probably about the year 270. Their bodies were ordered to be thrown into the Seine, lest the Christians should bury them with honour, but they were rescued by a woman, and laid secretly in the ground, about six miles from Paris. Over this spot a stately Church arose in after years, bearing the name of St. Denys. To this Church the Kings of France always went to pray, before undertaking any of their wars, and to return thanks after a victory. The standard of France, or Oriflamme, was called also the Standard of St. Denys, and his name was the war-cry of the French Crusaders on the plains of Palestine. The Abbey Church of St. Denys was the burying place of the Kings of France, until the time of the Revolution, when it was desecrated by the infidel party, who cared nothing for either Kings or Saints.

St. Denys, Bishop of Paris, must not be confused with Dionysius, the Areopagite, the convert of St. Paul, and the first Bishop of Athens. He was martyred in the reign of Domitian. Damaris, who is also mentioned in the Book of Acts, is by some supposed to have been his wife.

So not alone Christ's mission crown on high,
Shall gird your brows with radiance, and the sun
Of heaven's own light in your true bosom burn ;
For the great God who fills eternity,
Makes lowliest hearts His temple ; such we see
When to faith's earliest morn our eyes we turn,
And round the all-conquering Cross of shame discern,
Kneeling in light, a suffering hierarchy ;
Thence high and wide, 'mid persecution's night,
The east and west are with their glory bright ;
As on some festal eve in glorious Rome,
Far through the pillared shades of Peter's dome,
A thousand glowing lamps fling light on high,
Making their own calm day, their own pure sky,
Around the holiest altar-cross, whence springs
The mystic dove, shaking her golden wings.

Cathedral, p. 47.



OCTOBER 13TH.—1066.

St. Edward, King and Confessor.

“ABOVE all other states and kingdoms upon earth,” says St. Ælred, Abbot of Rievaulx, “England glories in the sanctity of her Kings ; some of them are crowned with martyrdom, and have departed from an earthly to a heavenly kingdom ; others, preferring exile to their home, have chosen to die for Christ, far from their own land. Some, laying aside their crown, have submitted to monastic discipline ; and others, reigning in justice and sanctity, have desired to benefit, rather than to command their subjects. Among whom, like a bright star, the glorious Edward shone ; as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, or like the full moon, he gave light in his days.”

Of these clouds, amidst which shone the mild light of the Confessor’s sanctity, we may read in all the histories of England, murder, massacre,

and treason, fierce contests between Danes and Saxons, oppression and revolt fill their pages, till we read of the death of Hardicanute, the last of the Danes, and the accession of his Saxon half-brother, St. Edward. His youth had been spent chiefly in Normandy, his mother's country; but though educated in the Palace of the Duke, he seems to have been unhurt by any of the temptations around him. From his infancy his delight was in prayer, in the services of the church, and the company of holy men. He was modest and silent, not from ignorance or dullness, but from sincere humility, and fear of the dangers of overmuch talking. Among all his virtues, the most remarkable was his mildness and sweetness of temper, which some feared would unfit him for holding his place upon so unquiet a throne. Yet never was there a happier reign than his. The very Danes who were settled in England, loved, respected, and feared him. In the only war he ever undertook, which was to restore Malcolm, King of Scotland, to the throne of which he had been deprived by Macbeth, he was victorious; and an attempt against him by the Danes failed of itself.

He married Edith, the daughter of Earl Godwin, a lady of great beauty, as the ancient chroniclers say, very learned, and withal modest and humble—in all things unlike her proud,

ambitious father; so that, according to the old proverb, she was indeed, a rose sprung from a thorn.

“Even in her girlish days,” says Ælred, “she anticipated the composure of age, and flying from public view, she was oftenest found in the secrecy of her chamber. There she was neither dissolved in idleness, nor burdensome to those around her from pride; but she was wont to read, or work with her hands, adorning vestments (for the church), with wonderful skill, and embroidering gold on silk in imitation of pictures. With such work, and with holy meditation, she avoided all idle conversation and company. She had, moreover, a lovely countenance; but in the goodness of her soul, she was far more beautiful.”

The two great works of St. Edward's reign were—firstly, the making a complete body of laws, to be observed throughout the whole kingdom, being probably no more than a revival of King Alfred's code, with such additions and improvements as time had made necessary; and secondly, the building of Westminster Abbey. During his adverse fortunes, St. Edward had made a vow to make a pilgrimage to Rome, to pray at the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. As soon as he came to the throne, he began to think of fulfilling it, but his Bishops and Nobles

begged him so earnestly not to leave his country in such dangerous times, that he agreed to send to Rome, and asked to be freed from his promise. The Pope consented, on condition that he should give to the poor all the money which his pilgrimage would have cost him, and either found a new Monastery in honour of St. Peter, or add to the endowments of an old one. The King gladly accepted the conditions, and founded a new Church and Monastery at Westminster, in place of one which had been founded there by Offa, King of Mercia, in the eighth century. It was finished in 1065, and consecrated on the Feast of the Holy Innocents. St. Edward was too ill to be present, but his Queen was there. The rejoicings lasted many days, but in the midst of them the end of the holy King drew near. The Queen never left him, and ministered to his wants with her own hands. The Abbot Ælred thus describes his passing into immortality: "The King, then, knowing that the hour drew near in which he should depart out of this world to Christ, desired his friends to moderate their grief, so as not to interrupt the joy to which this hope gave birth. 'If you loved me,' said he, 'you would rejoice, because I go to my Father, to receive the reward promised to the faithful, not for my own merits, but by the grace of the Lord, my Saviour, who pitieth whom He

will, and sheweth mercy to whom it pleaseth Him: but do you follow your friend with your prayers, and withstand by psalms and prayers those who would oppose my passage to heaven; for although they cannot overcome the faith of the Crucified, yet hardly any one is so perfect that they cannot try to hinder him, or to terrify him.'” He commended the Queen to her brother and other relations, praising her great devotion to him; and seeing her weep and sob bitterly, he said to her, with great tenderness, “Weep not, my daughter, for I shall not die, but live; and departing from the land of the dying, I believe that I shall see the good things of the Lord, in the land of the living.” At last, having strengthened himself for his departure, by receiving the body and blood of the Lord, he commended himself to God; and in the faith of Christ, with the Sacraments of Christ, and in the hope of His promises, he departed from the world an old man and full of days, and leaving his body to be buried in the Church he had founded, his pure spirit was united to the Father of spirits, with Him to live for ever.

If we would learn more of him as a Saint, living upon earth with his heart in heaven, we find this farther account of him given by the Abbot of Rievaulx: “The spirit of inward holiness shone even in his body, a singular

sweetness appeared in his countenance, gravity in his gait, and simplicity in his manners. He behaved to his servants as an equal; to Priests he was most humble, and kind to the people; the fellow-sufferer of the miserable, and bountiful to the needy. Wonderful was his devotion in the worship of God, and his care in repairing Churches and Monasteries, even while he sat as King on his lofty throne, decorated with gold and purple, he was still the father of orphans and the judge of the widows. His treasury seemed to be the public property of the whole world, the common chest of the poor. For the king esteemed all that he possessed, as not his own, but as belonging to all." God rewarded his sanctity, by bestowing upon his kingdom the blessing of peace, and of freedom from foreign invasion. And even the tumults at home were short-lived, and easily quelled, which was the more remarkable, because the king was so gentle that he would not speak a harsh word to the meanest of his subjects. "He was a man," says an old writer "for the simplicity of his manners, little able to govern, but devoted to God, and therefore directed by Him." His Queen Edith was buried near him. His tomb is still to be seen in Westminster Abbey, but very little of his Church remains, the present one was built chiefly in the reign of Henry III.

Thine is the art of artless souls, true seer !
To honour thy God in all things standing near.
Divine prerogative ! The blameless soul,
Its own simplicity, with sweet control
Leads on, and, like a guardian spirit, brings
Into the Palace of the King of Kings,
The Mount of God. To him all nature stirs,
Ranging herself in glowing characters ;
Seen thro' Faith's light'ning mirror ; blooming skies
Come down on earth and sea, like vernal dyes
Speaking of Resurrection :—all are rife
And animate with forms of beauteous life,
Unseen before ; 'mid busiest scenes below,
The messengers of Mercy come and go.

Cathedral, p. 263.

OCTOBER 17TH.—679.

St. Etheldreda.

ST. ETHELDREDA (or Audry) was the daughter of Anna, King of the East Angles, and of St. Hereswyda, his wife, and was brought up by them in the fear of God. At their desire she married a Prince named Touberelet, who died three years after their marriage, leaving her the

Isle of Ely as her dower. On her husband's death, she retired into that solitary place, and for five years lived a life of the strictest devotion. She was afterwards compelled to marry Egfrid, the powerful King of Northumberland. Like her first husband Touberelet, Egfrid seems to have allowed and encouraged her to give her whole time and thoughts to the service of God, and the care of the poor and afflicted. Etheldreda afterwards became a Nun at Coldingham, near Berwick ; and in the year 672, she returned to her old home at Ely, and founded a Monastery there, with two houses, one for men, and the other for women. The Nunnery she governed herself, as abbess, and her own life was so holy as to be a rule and pattern to all her sisters.

The patience and thankfulness in sickness and suffering were as remarkable as her self-denying and fervent devotion and charity had been throughout her life, and she died at last with such great compunction and humility, as is felt most deeply by the most holy, who see their own sinfulness in the light of God's holiness, and knowing Him best, best know themselves.

Ely Cathedral, which was consecrated in 1252, was built in the place of the ancient Church of St. Etheldreda's Monastery, and her remains, with those of her sister Saxburga, and

her nieces, Ermenilda and Wereburga, all honoured as Saints, were laid under the east end of the Cathedral.

Pines may lower, and laurels flourish—
Deathless green is only thine ;
Type of hearts which airs divine
Cheer, and high communions nourish,
Hearts on whose pure virgin wreath
Sin indulg'd might never breathe.



OCTOBER 25TH.—288.

St. Crispin, Martyr.

ST. CRISPIN, and his brother Crispinian, were among the companions of St. Denys, the Apostle of Paris. Soissons was the scene of their labours. They instructed the people daily, as occasion offered, in the knowledge of God ; and as St. Paul laboured with his own hands, that he might not be burdensome to any, though nobly born, so they earned a livelihood by making shoes. The heathens, astonished at their charity and heavenly lives, listened to their teaching, and many of them were converted to the faith of Christ.

These holy brothers were arrested by command of the Emperor Maximian, and brought before the governor, who, after inflicting horrid tortures upon them, condemned them to be beheaded the 25th of October, 288.

There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime ,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting clime ;
Who carry music in their heart,
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

Christian Year.

NOVEMBER 6TH.—559.

St. Leonard.

ST. LEONARD was a nobleman of high rank at the court of Clovis, the first Christian King of France. He was converted, probably at the same time with the King, by St. Remigius, and after his conversion he left the court, notwithstanding all the King's entreaties that he would remain there, and gave himself up wholly to a

life of devotion. He lived at first with St. Remigius, that he might have the benefit of his constant instructions, and afterwards retired into a Monastery near Orleans, where he became a Monk. Some time afterwards he left this Monastery and travelled through Berri, converting many of the heathen as he went. He then built himself an oratory, or a place for prayer, a little way from Limoges. He lived there for some time upon wild herbs and fruits, like St. John the Baptist, never leaving his retreat, but to go to some of the neighbouring Churches, and conversing with none but God alone. Afterwards he was joined by other holy men, and his hermitage became a flourishing Monastery. St. Leonard was most remarkable for his charity towards captives and prisoners. He visited them in prison, and sometimes obtained liberty for them, but his great aim and endeavour was to bring them to true repentance and reformation. This charitable work of visiting prisoners, which our Lord Himself numbers among the good deeds which He will requite as if done to Himself, must have been both more difficult and even more needful in St. Leonard's time than in our own. Prisoners were then often treated very cruelly, and, as seldom happens now, they were sometimes innocent people, imprisoned, and perhaps tor-

tured, by powerful and wicked men, in order to get possession of their wealth, or because they had some quarrel against them or some of their relations, and wished for revenge. Besides these there were captives taken in war, and, as there are in all times, criminals suffering justly for their evil deeds. To the service of all such did St. Leonard devote himself, and after many years so spent, his Heavenly Master took him to his reward, to hear those blessed words, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." "I was in prison and ye came unto me." St. Leonard died in 559.

Even so, who loves the Lord aright,
No soul of man can worthless find ;
All will be precious in his sight,
Since Christ on all hath shin'd :
But chiefly Christian souls ; for they,
Though worn and soil'd with sinful clay,
Are yet, to eyes that see them true,
All glistening with baptismal dew.

Then marvel not, if such as bask
In purest light of innocence,
Hope against hope, in love's dear task,
Spite of all dark offence.
If they who hate the trespass most,
Yet, when all other love is lost,
Love the poor sinner, marvel not ;
Christ's mark outwears the rankest blot.

Christian Year.

NOVEMBER 11TH.—397.

St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor.

ST. MARTIN was born about the year 316, in Pannonia, in a town which now forms part of Hungary ; his father was a pagan, and had risen from the ranks to the command of a cohort. His son was brought up at Pavia, in North Italy, with very little education. What influenced Martin is not known ; but at the age of ten, he fled to the Church against the wishes of his parents, and enrolled himself as a catechumen. Under these first impressions he wished to retire to the desert as a solitary ; however, things do not happen after our wishes here below, so at fifteen he was seized at his father's desire, and enlisted in the army. In consequence he remained a soldier five years, and was sent into Gaul. It is recorded of him, that at a time when he was stationed at Amiens, being then eighteen, he met at the gate of the city a poor man

without clothes. It was mid-winter, and the weather more than usually severe ; he had nothing on him but his single military cloak and his arms. The youth took his sword, cut the cloak in two, and gave half to the beggar. The bystanders jeered or admired according to their turn of mind ; and he went away. Next night he had a dream ; he saw our Lord clad in the half cloak which he had given to the poor man. Christ bade him observe it, and then said to the angels who stood around, "Martin, yet a catechumen, hath wrapped me in this garment." On this Martin was baptized, and two years after left the army.

He then had recourse to the great St. Hilary, afterwards Bishop of Poitiers, and an illustrious confessor in the Arian troubles. Martin, however, was to precede him in suffering in the same holy cause. He undertook a journey into Pannonia, with a view to the conversion of his parents. In the passes of the Alps he fell in with a bandit. His friend Sulpicius Severus, who wrote his history, gives this account of what happened. "One of them raised an axe and aimed it at his head, but another intercepted the blow. However, his hands were bound behind him, and he was committed to one of them in custody for plunder. This man took him aside and began to ask him who he was. He an-

swered, 'A Christian.' He then inquired whether he felt afraid. He avowed without wavering that he never felt so much at ease, being confident that the Lord's mercy would be specially with him in temptations; rather he felt sorry for him, who, living in robbery, was unworthy of the mercy of Christ. Entering, then, on the subject of the Gospel, he preached the Word of God to him. To be brief, the robber believed, attended on him, and set him on his way, begging his prayers. This man was afterwards seen in the profession of religion."

He gained his mother, but his father persisted in paganism. At this time Illyricum was almost given over to Arianism. He did not scruple to confess the truth then, was seized, beaten with rods publicly, and driven out of the city. He lived for several years in solitude at Milan, and then again joined St. Hilary, who had returned from exile, and founded at Poitiers the first monastic establishment known to have existed in France. St. Martin is famed for the miracles which he wrought, and is even said to have raised the dead.

He was made Bishop of Tours, in the year 372, about the time that St. Ambrose and St. Basil were made Bishops, and St. Athanasius died. Sulpicius thus speaks of him in his episcopate:

"He remained just what he was before ; with the same humbleness of heart, the same meanness of dress, and with a fulness of authority and grace which responded to the dignity of a Bishop, without infringing on the rule and virtue of a Monk. For awhile he lived in a cell built on to the church ; but unable to bear the interruption of visitors, he made himself a Monastery at Marmontre, about two miles out of the city. So secret and retired was the place, that he did not miss the solitude of the desert. On one side it was bounded by the high and precipitous rock of a mountain, on the other the level was shut in by a gentle bend of the river Loire. There was but one way into it, and that very narrow. His own cell was of wood. Many of the brethren made themselves dwellings of the same kind, but most hollowed out the stone of the mountain which was above them. There were eighty scholars who were in training after the pattern of their saintly master. No one had aught his own ; all things were thrown into a common stock. They had no art but that of transcribing, which was given to the younger, the older gave themselves to prayer. They seldom left their cell except to go to the place of prayer. They took their meat together after the time of fasting. Most of them were clad in camel's hair ; a softer garment was a

crime ; and what makes it more remarkable is, that many of them were accounted noble, who, after a very different education had forced themselves to this humility and patience, and we have lived to see a great many of them Bishops. For what is the city or church which did not covet priests from the Monastery of St. Martin?" This extract may seem to show us what kind of life was led by these ancient Monks.

But St. Martin was a man of action still more than of meditation. Gaul was even at this time almost pagan. Though the great cities had long enjoyed the light of Christianity, and were many of them Episcopal Sees, the country people had never been evangelized, and still frequented their idol temples. Martin took upon him to enter and destroy the kingdom of Satan with his own hands. He went, unarmed, among the temples, the altars, the statues, the groves, and the processions of the false worship, attended by his monastic brethren : he presented himself to the barbarian multitude, converted them, and made them join with him in the destruction of their old idolatry. He is accounted the Apostle of Gaul, and may be well believed to have had the miraculous powers, as well as to have done the work of an apostle, though we may not be able to say for a certainty that all the accounts given of his miracles

are true. We cannot be *certain* about any miracles but those of which we read in Scripture, because all other books, being written by man, may have mistakes in them ; but there are many accounts of miracles in church history, which we have great reason to believe, though we may not be quite sure about them, and St. Martin's seem to have been of this number.

Martin was not content with destroying the heathen temples, he built churches in their room.

One other passage of his history shall be mentioned, if that can be so called, which brings before us his departure from this life into the unseen world. The events of his life are too many to be here recorded.

He had been to a distant part of his diocese to settle a quarrel among the clergy there. When he set out to return, his strength suddenly failed him, and he felt his end approaching. A fever had already got possession of him. He assembled his disciples, and told them he was going ; they began passionately to lament that he was giving over his flock to the wolves. The Saint was moved, and used words which have become famous in the Church, "Lord, if I be yet needful to Thy people, I decline not the labour ; Thy will be done." His wish was heard—not his prayer. His fever lay upon him ;

during the trial he continued his devotions as usual, causing himself to be laid in sackcloth and ashes. On his disciples asking to be allowed to place straw under him instead, he made answer, "Sons, it becomes not a Christian to die except in ashes." They wished to turn him on his side to ease his position ; but he said he wished rather to see heaven than earth, that his spirit might, as it were, be setting out on its journey. It is said, that on this he saw the evil spirit at his side ; and he spoke to him in words expressing his assurance that his Lord's merits were fully imparted to him, and his soul perfected. "Beast of blood," he exclaimed, "why standest thou here ? Deadly one, thou shalt find nothing in me ; Abraham's bosom is receiving me." With these words he died, being more than eighty years of age.

ST. MARTIN.

The wind blows o'er the barren heath,
So cutting and so cold,
And drives the shivering flocks along
O'er stubble-field and wold.

The hare lies crouching in the snow,
The ice-bound brook stands still,
And over the deserted road
The raven's cry sounds shrill.

Three horsemen ride in joyous mood,
Right through the snow and wind,
Their blood is warm—their bounding steeds
Leave cold and care behind.

Over the ice so glassy smooth,
The fields so rough and wide,
Beneath the towers of Amiens,
Did those three horsemen ride.

“O gallants! noble gallants!
The wind blows bitter cold,
O listen, noble gallants,
So weak am I, and old!”

“Oh sorrow was my father—
My mother, misery,
O give me gold, for God’s dear love,
Lest of the cold I die.”

The foremost horseman looked not back,
The second passed him by,
The third reined up his eager steed,
At that poor beggar’s cry.

“No silver nor yet gold have I,
Or both were gladly given,
But what I have that give I thee,
For love of God in heaven.”

He drew his sword, so sharp and good,
Cut through his mantle gay,
One half he gave that shivering man,
And then rode on his way.

The beggar's blessing followed him,
He spurred on hastily,
For his comrades at his mantle torn
Were laughing scornfully.

St. Martin was with travel spent,
And deep in sleep did lie,
When, brighter than earth's brightest light,
A vision fill'd his eye.

The heav'n so high, the heav'n so wide,
Was open'd to his sight,
With ordered files of angels blest
In raiment pure and white.

And in his vision *One* he saw
Upon the throne of heaven,
And at His feet the mantle lay,
To that poor beggar given.

And to the angel-host it seemed,
Then spake a thrilling voice,
"Behold a heathen's gift to me,
And over him rejoice."

St. Martin heard the gracious words,
He heard them joyfully,
And the gift of faith was the reward
Of the heathen's charity.

Then pray we Him by whom such grace
Was to St. Martin given,
Of our poor gifts to make for us
A treasure in the Heaven.

NOVEMBER 13TH.—444.

St. Britius, Bishop.

ST. BRITIUS was a native of Tours, of humble birth. He was educated in the Monastery of Marmontier, under the watchful care of the blessed St. Martin; but in his youth his wayward levity gave much offence to the brethren. Nevertheless, St. Martin, foreseeing his future sanctity, ordained him deacon and priest, and foretold that he should succeed him as Bishop of Tours. For a time his ordination seemed only to increase his pride and wilfulness. He was not indeed guilty of anything openly wicked, but his heart was full of the love of the world. Though he had been originally poor, he began to buy fine horses, and slaves, and other things unsuited to his holy office. Once when St. Martin reproved him for a fault, he poured forth a torrent of abuse which the Saint meekly bore, seeing that he was for the time under the

power of an evil spirit. He prayed for him, and foreseeing a coming change, refused to depose him from his office, as some advised him to do.

At length the heart of Britius was touched, and he bitterly lamented his former life. St. Martin comforted him, but foretold that he should be purified by suffering. Prayer and devout contemplation now became the employment of his life. On the death of St. Martin, he was chosen Bishop in his stead.

The suffering which his kind master had foretold came upon him in a form very hard to bear. He was accused of a great crime, and driven from Tours, while another was made Bishop in his place. He passed seven years in exile, bewailing his early sins with many tears, and confessing that for them his punishment was just, though he was wholly innocent of the crime for which he suffered. When his penance was accomplished, God interfered in his behalf; his innocence was acknowledged, and he was recalled to his Bishopric, where he lived seven years longer in peace, and in 444 slept in the Lord.

Th' impenitent would still abate
His pain, the mourner still enhance—
O Lord, I know my sin is great,
I would not hide away from thee in heartless trance;

When penal lightnings glare,
O give me grace, to bare
My sinful bosom to the blast;—
Nor when the judgment hour is past,
Bask on in warmth of worldly ease,
But hold to the wrong'd Cross on worn and aching knees.

NOVEMBER 15TH.—564.

St. Machutus, or Malo, Bishop.

ST. MACHUTUS was the son of a Welsh or British nobleman. He was baptized and educated in the Christian faith, by St. Brendan, who had come from Ireland, and lived in a Monastery in the same valley where St. Machutus was born. St. Machutus is said to have been very holy from his childhood. He was driven by some troubles in the reign of the famous King Arthur, to take refuge in Brittany, where he preached to the brethren, and was elected Bishop of one of the Churches there, now called after him, St. Malo. Notwithstand-

ing his holiness and charity, and the wonderful works which he wrought in converting the pagans, he was cruelly persecuted by some evil-minded men, who at last thrust him out of his Bishopric, together with seven other holy men, his chosen companions ; yet this heavy cross he bore after our Lord with a courageous mind. He took refuge at Saintes, in Aquitaine, where St. Leontius, the Archbishop, received him with great kindness, and delighted to avail himself of his counsels and his prayers. Machutus did not forget his own rebellious children, but daily implored for them penitence and pardon. His prayers were heard, and he was permitted to return and give them his blessing. As he was on his way to Saintes, once more to see his friend St. Leontius, he was overtaken with mortal sickness, and gave up his soul to Christ on the 15th of November, 564.

Not by the martyr's death alone,
The martyr's crown in heaven is won ;
There is a triumph-robe on high
For bloodless fields of victory.

What though not taught the flame to feel,
The lion's den, the torturing wheel ;
Himself his only enemy,
He learns a living death to die.

What though nor executioner,
Nor scourge, nor stake, nor chains be there,
To those prepared with Christ to die,
'Tis all supplied with charity.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary.

NOVEMBER 17TH.—1200.

St. Hugh, Bishop.

ST. HUGH was born of a noble family in Burgundy, in 1140. His mother died when he was eight years old, and his father then retired into a Monastery near his castle, and dedicated the child to the service of God in the same house. He was ordained deacon at the age of nineteen.

Desiring to lead a stricter life than he was bound to by the house in which he had been brought up, he joined the Carthusian Monks in the great Chartreuse, near Grenoble, whose discipline is severer than that of any other religious order. After he had been there some time, he was asked by a venerable Monk if he desired to

receive Priest's orders. He answered joyfully that it was the dearest wish of his heart. But the old man reminded him how many devout men had trembled to take upon themselves so awful a function. St. Hugh immediately threw himself on the ground, and bewailed his unworthiness with many tears. The father seeing that his eagerness arose not from presumption, but from an earnest longing to be brought yet nearer to the presence of God, assured him that his desire should shortly be fulfilled, and that he should afterwards be called to the office of a Bishop. In 1181 he was made Prior of the monastery of Witham, in Somersetshire, founded by King Henry II., and in 1186 was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln. Here he gathered around him wise and prudent men to advise him on the affairs of his See, and appointed none to the care of his flock but priests of a quiet and modest spirit. He was a father to the poor of his diocese, and often protected them from the oppression of the great and powerful. He visited the hospitals for those afflicted with leprosy, a dreadful disease then very common, most painful and disgusting even to look upon. He withstood King Henry II. in several acts of injustice, and made his son, the lion-hearted Richard, to quail before him. Being in great want of money to support a war with France, Richard laid a heavy

tax upon the clergy. St. Hugh knowing how grievously this would oppress the poor, refused to give his consent ; only one other Bishop had the courage to join with him, and his courage gave way at the threat of banishment and confiscation, and he submitted to the King's pleasure. But the holy Monk of Lincoln, who, in the solitudes of the Chartreuse, had gained the mastery over himself, was unshaken by the wind of earthly fear. As the soldiers approached to execute the King's orders, he commanded that they should be excommunicated in all the parishes around Lincoln with the sound of bells. This sentence terrified them so much that they departed, without venturing to touch anything belonging to the Bishop.

But the Saint, fearing from the temper of the King, that a severer punishment might be in store for his innocent people, went himself to court to defend his own conduct. Some of his friends went to meet him, and begged him to yield, remembering the murder of St. Thomas of Canterbury about twenty years before, and dreading the consequences of his unbending resolution. When he arrived at the palace, he constrained the King almost by force to embrace him in token of reconciliation. He then took Richard aside, remonstrated with him on his manner of life, and made him solemnly promise

to amend it. When he was gone, the King said, "If all Bishops were such as he, Kings would have nothing to say against them." From his singular power in subduing the spirit of princes, this Saint has been called "Regum malleus," or "The hammer of Kings."

St. Hugh began to rebuild Lincoln Cathedral, which was not finished till about the end of the thirteenth century.

The Saint was overtaken by his last illness in London, in the year 1200. The disease increasing, he would often pray aloud, and say, "O merciful God, grant me rest." "O good Lord, the true God, at last grant me rest." Some one who stood near, said, "Soon, my Lord, thou shalt rest." He replied, "Truly blessed are they to whom at the Day of Judgment rest undisturbed shall be given." The other answering that by the will of God that would be the Day of Judgment in which he should depart from this life, he said with confidence, "Thou thinkest wrongly, for that will be a day, not of judgment, but of grace and mercy, in which I shall finish my life." His whole time was now given to prayer. When reminded to make his will, he left all he had to the poor of his Church.

On the 17th of November, feeling his strength rapidly going, he called for the Monks and

Clergy, and desired them to bury him at Lincoln. Towards evening, seeing them weeping round him, he tried to comfort them with sweet and heavenly discourse. Laying his hand on the head of each, he commended them all to God, and to the word of his grace. At last his voice failed, and they prayed him to entreat the Lord to send him a fit successor. "God grant you one," he said. The pavement was then strewn with ashes in the form of a cross, and the office of compline, the last service of the day was begun. While they were singing the verse, "He shall call upon me, and I will hear him, yea, I am with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and bring him to honour." He desired them to lay him in the ashes, and they stood round him till the Psalms were ended. Then, with a most placid countenance, he gave up his soul into the hands of his Creator, and passed to the sabbath of eternal rest, as they were intoning the canticle of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace."

By your Lord's creative breath,
Breathing Hope and scorn of death,
Love untired, on Pardon leaning ;
Joy, all mercies sweetly gleaning ;
Zeal, the bolts of Heaven to dart,
Fragrant Purity of heart ;
By the voice ineffable,
Wakening your mazed thoughts with an Almighty spell ;

By His word, and by His hour,
When the PROMISE came with power—
By His HOLY SPIRIT'S token—
By His saintly chain unbroken,
Lengthening, while the world lasts on,
From His cross unto His throne,
Guardians of His Virgin Spouse,
Know that His might is yours, whose breathing sealed
your vows.

Lyra Apostolica.

NOVEMBER 20.—870.

St. Edmund, King and Martyr.

THOUGH from the time of King Egbert in 802, the Kings of Wessex were monarchs of all England, yet several of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy continued to be governed by their own kings, as tributaries to the Kings of the West Saxons. Thus St. Edmund, in his fourteenth year, succeeded to the crown of East Anglia. He was crowned by Humbert, Bishop of Elmham, and chose him for his spiritual director. His first and principal care was to restore the

Churches and Monasteries, which had suffered in the late wars with the Mercians. The historians of that age have given a beautiful picture of the saintly virtues of the young King, of his tender regard for the poor and friendless, and of his ardent devotion to the service of God. "Already," say they, "the Saint showed forth in his countenance what was afterwards manifested by the Divine Will, for the boy with his whole ability trod the path of virtue, which the Divine Goodness foreknew would end in martyrdom." He employed a whole year of retirement, in a tower which he built for himself in the country, in learning by heart the Book of Psalms.

When he had reigned about fourteen years, an invasion of the Danish sea-kings, Hinguar and Hubba, brought ruin on many parts of England. They came to avenge the death of Ragnor Lodbrog, their father, which had happened some years before. The force of the East Angles was unable to resist the savage Northmen. The barbarians, reeking with blood, poured down upon St. Edmund's dominions, burning Thetford, the first town they met with, and laying waste all before them. The people, relying upon the faith of treaties, thought themselves secure, and so were unprepared. However, the good King raised what forces he could, met the infidels,

or at least a part of their army, near Thetford, and discomfited them. But seeing them soon after reinforced with fresh numbers, against which his small body would not have been able to stand, unwilling to sacrifice the lives of his soldiers in vain, and in his charity compassionating the souls of his heathen enemies, who would be slain in a fruitless engagement, he disbanded his troops, and retired towards his Castle of Framlingham, in Suffolk. The barbarians had sent him proposals, which he could not accept either as a King or a Christian. These the Saint rejected, and having fought for the people committed to his charge as long as he felt resistance to be his duty, he prepared himself for what was far more in accordance with his character—patient suffering for his faith. He was overtaken and surrounded by the Danes, who again offered him life and safety if he would deny his Lord. St. Edmund answered that his faith was dearer to him than his life, and that he would never buy his life by offending God. Hinguar, enraged at this answer, in his barbarous rage, caused him to be cruelly beaten with cudgels, then to be tied to a tree, and torn a long time together with whips. All this he bore with invincible patience and meekness, never ceasing to call upon the name of Jesus. The infidels were the more exaspe-

rated ; and as he stood bound to the tree, they made him a mark wantonly to shoot at, till his body was covered with arrows. Hinguar, tired at last of his own cruelty, and finding that he could not tire out his victim's patience, commanded the King's head to be struck off, and sent him, like another martyred King eight hundred years afterwards, "from a corruptible crown to an incorruptible."

Who is the happy warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
—It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought.
Whose high endeavours are an inward light,
That makes the path before him always bright:
Who, doomed to go in company with pain,
And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power,
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable—because occasions rise,
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

Wordsworth.

NOVEMBER 22ND.—230.

St. Cecilia. V. M.

LITTLE more is known of this Martyr, than that she was a Roman lady of high birth, educated in the principles and perfect practice of the Christian faith, and yet compelled by her parents to marry a heathen, named Valerian. She converted him, and afterwards his brother Tiburtius, to Christianity. The two brothers were beheaded for the faith of Christ, and Cecilia herself suffered martyrdom a few days afterwards. She is generally represented with some musical instrument in her hand, it being recorded of her, that she was not only assiduous in singing the praises of God, but skilled in the use of instruments, which she employed in the same holy service.

My spirit hath gone up in yonder cloud,
Of solemn and sweet sound—the many-voic'd,
 Peal upon peal, and now
The choral voice alone

At door of Heav'n. My soul is all unspher'd,
Soaring and soaring on the crystal car
 Of airy sweetness borne,
And drinks ethereal air

Amid celestial shapes. I hear a voice
Alone before the Trinal Majesty,
Singing the Eternal Lamb,
While silence sits aloof.

Cathedral, p. 63.



NOVEMBER 23RD.—100.

St. Clement, Bishop and Martyr.

THE early history of St. Clement is very uncertain, but there is reason to suppose that he was by birth a Jew. He was the companion and fellow-labourer of St. Paul, and was at Philippi in the year 62, when the blessed Apostle wrote his Epistle to the Church in that city, as we learn from his own words, "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are written in the book of life."

He is mentioned by ancient writers as "almost an apostle." He followed St. Peter to Rome, and was consecrated Bishop by him. He does not, however, appear to have exercised the office of Bishop of Rome till after the death of St. Linus—mentioned by St. Paul, II. Tim. iv. 21—

who was elected after the Martyrdom of St. Peter, in 66. In the year 71, St. Clement was invested with the episcopal authority. The general persecution under Domitian soon fell upon the Church. It was foretold to St. Hermas in a vision, who revealed it to St. Clement, that the faithful might be warned of the coming storm. Hermas is mentioned by St. Paul in Rom. xvi. 14.

The Church of Corinth was then torn by internal divisions, some daring leaders having made a schism, and deposed the clergy who refused to submit to them. Many fell away from the faith in consequence, and occasion was given to the heathen to blaspheme. Those who were steadfast besought the Church of Rome to assist them, but the dangers of the persecution for some time prevented the Roman Christians from helping their brethren at Corinth, except by their prayers. As soon as peace returned, St. Clement wrote to them, and exhorted them all, and especially the authors of the evil, to repentance, and holy humility, and submission to the will of God.

This Epistle is celebrated among ecclesiastical writings. It was received, and publicly read, not only in Corinth, but in many other Churches.

The labours of St. Clement were finished in the year 100. The particulars of his death are

not known, but he probably suffered in the persecution of Trajan. The Sacramentary of St. Gregory, one of the earliest service books of the Church, contains this preface on the day of his feast. "It is very worthy, just, becoming, and salutary, that we should always, and everywhere, give thanks to Thee, O Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, and on this day which the passion of the blessed Clement has consecrated, and made venerable to us, who, imbued with the preaching of the Apostles, educated in their heavenly doctrine, and illustrious in the dignity of their succession, shone forth a renowned Martyr, and a famous Bishop, through Christ our Lord.

As heavenly blue breaks on a troubled deep,
A voice of gentle blame,
From the calm grave where Paul and Peter sleep,
Unto their children came,
From Rome to Corinth. O'er the rising din,
It swell'd, as from their purer seats above,
And, like a solemn undersound therein,
Paul's moving tone. It was thy watchful love,
Clement, whose name is in the book of life ;
The while thy Church, true to heaven's sacred mould,
'Mid persecution, poverty, and strife ;
Glorious within, and wrought of purest gold,
Began, 'mid hanging mists, her greatness to unfold.

Cathedral, p. 274.

NOVEMBER 25TH.—4TH CENTURY.

St. Katherine, V. M.

ST. KATHERINE was called to witness a noble confession for Christ, at Alexandria, during the reign of the Emperor Maximian II. Many shared in her suffering, and in its eternal reward. Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, has drawn a picture of the conflict which the holy Confessors had to endure in the early part of the fourth century. "The Christians," he says, "trampled under foot the fear of death, and despised the violent tyranny of man. The men endured the fire and the sword, the piercing of nails, wild beasts, drowning in deep gulfs of the sea, the cutting off, and burning of limbs, and the tearing out of their eyes; in a word, the mutilation of their whole bodies; and in addition to these, famine, fetters, and chains; yet in all this, they would rather give a proof of their endurance for true piety, than reject God, and

worship idols. Even women, no less strengthened than men by the doctrine of the true faith, endured, some of them, the same trials as the men, and attained equal rewards of their virtue." Among this glorious company, he describes one in particular, who is supposed by many to have been St. Katherine, though some are inclined to think that he commemorates St. Dorothy. "There was one Christian woman," he says, "the noblest and the wealthiest of all the ladies of Alexandria. She was renowned for her remarkable learning, as well as for her riches, and the splendour of her birth, and still more for her modesty and purity. The tyrant was awed before her, and seeing that she feared not death, but rather longed for it, he contented himself with robbing her of all her wealth, and sending her into exile."

It is related in another history of the time, that the Saint was of royal descent, and famed for her learning. She silenced a company of heathen philosophers, whom Maximian had sent to reason with her; and some of them, convinced by her arguments, confessed Christ, and suffered death. The same history tells us, that she was condemned to be tortured by an engine made of several wheels joined together, and armed with sharp pointed spikes, which, when the wheels went round, would have torn her in pieces; but

the engine was destroyed by an unseen power,
and the Saint finished her confession by the
sword. Hence a wheel is her usual emblem.

What power hath pain or anguish
Over the spirit blest,
Which quietly, and gladly,
Upon her God doth rest ?

E'en while the mortal body
Sinks wearied to the dust,
In glory beatific,
The soul is with the just. '

All forms of torture round her,
All hideous shapes of death,
The seething oil, the straining rack,
The red fire's scorching breath.

"Death," said the maiden smiling,
"How gentle is thy guise ;
How beautiful the roses
That bloom in Paradise."

"The roses, Dorothea !
These roses would I see,
That in such scorching garden,
So fresh and lovely be.

"Now send me but such roses,
From before thy Master's throne ;
And, on thy bed of anguish,
The Christian's God I'll own."

Now is the meek voice silent,
Which dying praised the Lord ;
As harp-notes faintly linger,
Around a broken chord.

Theophilus the Provost,
Hears a knocking at his door,
And a boy of wondrous beauty,
Stands on his chamber floor.

His face is like a sunbeam,
A snow-white robe he wears,
And in his hand a basket
Of roses bright he bears.

And softly, sweetly, clearly,
Thus spake the vision bright :—
“To thee sends Dorothea,
These roses red and white.

“Thou bad’st her send thee roses
Which in Christ’s garden bloom,
Wherewith His brides adorn them,
To welcome their Bridegroom.

“The promised gift I bring thee,
These heavenly roses take,
And, at her death, acknowledge
That sooth the maiden spake.”

The wondrous boy hath vanished,
Yet there the roses lie—
A Christian man—Theophilus,
Went calmly forth to die.

In shame, and death, and torture,
Christ's name he hath confest,
And Dorothea's roses,
Now crown a Martyr blest.



DECEMBER 6TH.—342.

St. Nicolas, Bishop.

St. Nicolas, Bishop of Thyra, the capital of Lycia, in Lesser Asia, was born at Patara, a town in the same province, about three miles distant from the capital. He early devoted himself to God, in the Monastery of the Holy Zion, of which he was afterwards appointed Abbot. There he lived in seclusion, till he was chosen to fill the vacant see of Thyra. In this high office he became famous for his great piety and zeal ; which, as ancient writers testify, were honoured by God with frequent miracles. Instances of his charity are recorded, in which he bound those who were indebted to him not to tell his name until after his death. The Greek historians of his life say that he was imprisoned for the faith, and that he witnessed a good confession for Christ in the end of Dioclesian's persecution, 342.

St. Nicolas is generally represented in his pontifical dress giving the benediction, and near him, a cauldron containing several children. This alludes to his having miraculously delivered some Christian children, who had been condemned to that cruel death by the pagans.

St. Nicolas has been ever considered the patron of children. The reason of this is given in "the Book of Festivals." "It is said that his fader, hyght (called) Epiphanius, and his moder Joanna, when he was born, made him Christin, and called him Nycolas, that is a manne's name ; but he kepeth the name of a child, for he chose to kepe vertues, mekeness, and simpleness, and without malice. Thus he lyved all his lyfe in vertues with his childe's name. And therefore, children, do him worship (honour) before all other Saints."

Hence arose the ancient custom, among the children of cathedral and collegiate churches and schools, of celebrating his feast with many curious ceremonies. On St. Nicolas's Day one of the choristers was annually chosen by his companions to preside over them, with the name and dignity of a bishop—his office lasting till the Feast of the Holy Innocents.

The heart of childhood is all mirth ;
We frolic to and fro,

As free and blithe, as if on earth
Were no such thing as woe.

Who, but a Christian, through all life
That blessing may prolong?
Who, through the world's sad day of strife,
Still chant his morning song.

Christian Year.

DECEMBER 8TH.

Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

As the sun o'er misty shrouds,
When he walks upon the clouds;
Or as when the moon doth rise
And refreshes all the skies;
Or as when the lily flower,
Stands amid the vernal bower;
Or the water's glassy face
Doth reflect the starry space;
Thus above all mothers shone,
The mother of the Blessed One.

DECEMBER 13TH.—304.

St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr.

ST. LUCY was the daughter of a noble and wealthy family in Syracuse, in the island of Sicily. Her father died during her infancy, and she was brought up in the faith of Christ by her mother, Eutychia. While she was still very young, St. Lucy, without the knowledge of her mother, dedicated herself to Christ by a vow of perpetual celibacy ; that is, she vowed to remain unmarried all her life, that she might be the better able to care only for the things of the Lord, to be holy in body and spirit.

She was soon, however, asked in marriage by a noble pagan youth of Syracuse, and, strangely enough, her mother seems to have used her influence in his favour. Eutychia was soon afterwards seized with a dangerous illness, which seems to have brought her to a better mind, and,

thankful to God for her recovery, she listened patiently to what her daughter said, and no longer opposed her wishes. Lucy had not hitherto spoken of her vow, but she now sold all her jewels and goods for the use of the poor, and prepared to give herself up wholly to their service, and thus to minister to her Lord. When the young nobleman who had asked her in marriage heard of this, his love was changed into hatred, and he immediately accused her to the governor, Paschasius, of being a Christian. The persecution under Dioclesian and Maximian was then raging with great fury. When St. Lucy was called before the governor, she was exhorted and entreated to deny Christ, and was then threatened with the most shameful ill-usage; furious at her constancy, Paschasius ordered that she should be tortured by fire. But while her body was torn with red-hot pincers, her soul maintained its invincible firmness, and the strength of the Lord triumphed in her weakness. She was sent back to prison, where she soon after yielded up her spirit about the year 304.

Who knows but maiden mild or smiling boy,
Our own entrusted care and joy,
By His electing grace
May with His martyrs find their glorious place?
O hope, for prayer too bold and thrilling,
O bliss, to aid its high fulfilling!

O woe and wrong, O tenfold shame,
To mar or damp the angelic flame !
To draw His soldiers backward from the Cross !
Woe and eternal loss !



DECEMBER 16TH.

❶ *Sapientia.*

THIS holy day was so named from the two first words of a verse which used to be chanted on that day, being the first of a series of responses called the Greater Antiphones, formerly sung before Christmas.

The translation of the Latin words is as follows : " O wisdom, who comest out of the mouth of the Most High, reaching from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordering all things, come and teach us the way of understanding." It was customary in Monasteries to hold an annual festival on one of those days on which the Greater Antiphones were sung, which was shortly called the " O," antedating thus the joy of Christmas.

" O Eternal Wisdom, which proceedest from the mouth of the Most High, reaching from one end of creation unto the other, mightily and har-

moniously disposing all things, come Thou to teach us the way of understanding.

“O Root of Jesse, who art placed for a sign of the people, before whom kings shall shut their mouths, whom the Gentiles shall supplicate, come Thou to deliver us, do not tarry.

“O Key of David and Sceptre of the house of Israel, who openest and none shutteth, who shuttest and none openeth, come Thou, and bring forth the captive from the house of bondage, who sitteth in darkness and in the shadow of death.

“O rising Brightness of the Everlasting Light and Sun of Righteousness, come Thou and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

“O King and the Desire of all nations, and chief Corner-stone, who makest two to be one, come Thou and save man whom Thou didst form from the clay.

“O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Gatherer of the people and their Saviour, come Thou to save us, O Lord our God.”

DECEMBER 31ST.—335.**St. Sylvester, Bishop.**

ST. SYLVESTER was a native of Rome. Of his father, Rufinus, nothing is known ; his mother, Justina, was a pious and virtuous Christian matron, who devoted herself to the education of her son. It is remarkable how many great Saints have been thus trained in their infancy by holy mothers ; and many more, whose names are hidden from the eye of men, have owed their knowledge of the faith and discipline of Christ, to the gentle lessons and example of their mothers. Sylvester was ordained Priest about the year 286, just before Dioclesian's persecution. During the fiery trial that followed, the youthful Saint became remarkable for his zeal and piety. He escaped the fate of his brethren in the persecution, to fulfil higher duties which awaited him in the Church.

He was elected Bishop of Rome in 314 ; in

the same year was held the Council of Arles, to settle some disputes in the Church, at which three British Bishops, those of York, London, and Chester were present.

Eleven years afterwards, the first General Council of the whole Church met at Nice, in Bithynia, to condemn the heresy of Arius, who denied our Lord's Divinity. Sylvester was not present, either there or at Arles, but was represented by deputies. He died in 335.

Truth through the Sacred Volume hidden lies,
And spreads from end to end her sacred wing,
Through ritual, type, and storied mysteries.
From this or that, when Error points her sting,
From all her holds, Truth's stern defences spring,
And Text to Text the full accordance bears.
Through every page the Universal King,
From Eden's loss unto the end of years,
From East unto the West, the Son of Man appears.

Thus, when she made the Church her hallow'd shrine,
Founded on Jesus Christ the Corner-stone,
With Prophets and Apostles and the Line
Of order'd Ministers, Truth ever one,
Not here or there, but in the whole hath shone,
Whilst heresies arise of varying clime,
And varying form and colour, the true sun,
One and the same in all advancing time,
The whole His mansion makes, vast, uniform, sublime.

An Act of Praise to God

FOR HIS SAINTS, FROM THE "DEVOTIONS OF BISHOP
ANDREWES."

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us ; unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Blessed, praised, celebrated, magnified, exalted, glorified, and hallowed be Thy name, O Lord, the remembrance, and the mention, and every memorial of it ;

For the most honourable Senate of Patriarchs ;
The ever-venerable band of Prophets ;
The most famous company of Thy twelve Apostles, and of the Evangelists ;

The noble army of Martyrs and Ministers ;
The assembly of Doctors and Professors ;
The beautiful devotion of Virgins ;
The sweet innocence of children ;

For their faith and hope ;
Their labours and truth ;
Their bravery and zeal ;
Their learning and seclusion ;
Their chastity and simplicity ;
Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee ;
Glory to Thee, who hast glorified these, in
whom we also glorify Thee.

Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord
God Almighty ; just and true are Thy ways,
Thou King of Saints.





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